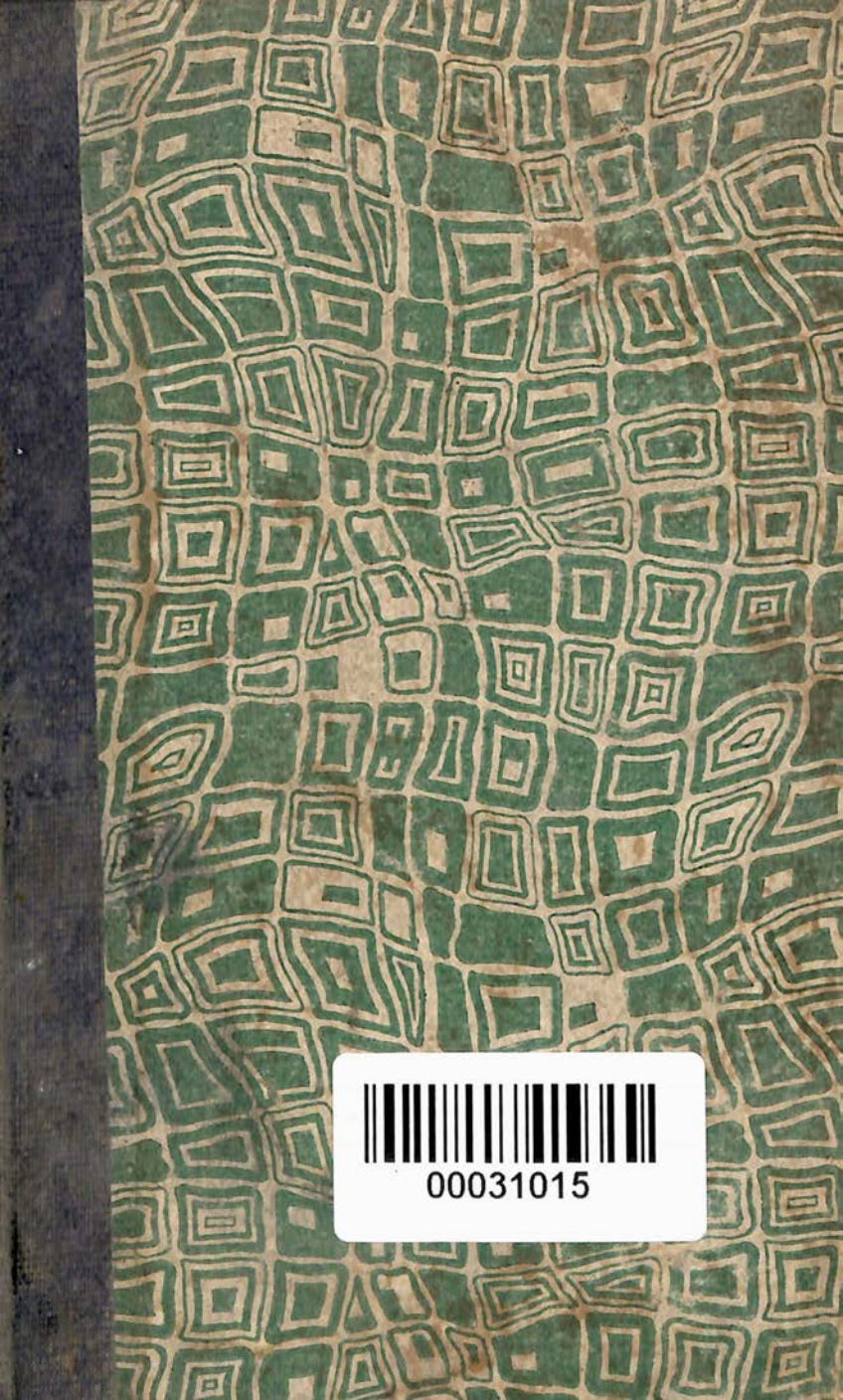
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FRANCIS THE FIRST,

AND OTHER

HISTORIC STUDIES.

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BY

A. BAILLIE COCHRANE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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The Council of Blood.

TWO races, who have filled a large space in the history of Europe, founded their homes upon the waves, and then arrested their dominion. Each one has said to the sea, "So far and no further," and the water has retreated obedient to their command. By both races edifices admirable in their design, and beautiful in their construction, have been erected on spots where once the tide ebbed and flowed; and each has made that sea, which menaced its existence, subservient to its wants, and a highway of civilization. Both races have been protected from the violence of the hostile

element by the barrier which the very force of the waves raised around them; for in the Lowland, the Netherland, Hollow-land, or Holland, the country is sheltered by the dunes or sand-banks tossed on high by the storms which sweep across the North Sea, while at Venice the Lido and the adjacent islands preserve the beautiful city from the raging of the vexed Adriatic.

The similarity of the rise and progress of the two races does not terminate here; for each, having been engaged for centuries in conflict with the elements, has had to contend afterwards with the still more relentless despotism of man. The Northern race has conquered in the battle of freedom, the Southern has been subjected

to the jealousy and caprice of many masters; but as though the difficulties with which their early existence was attended had added to the value of the conquest, the Netherlands and Venice became for centuries the objects of the cupidity of other nations. So in the chief cities of the Netherlands, and at Venice, lofty towers were erected, whence the watchman could discern the approaching danger, and give timely notice of the irruption of the rising waters, or of the approach of hostile armies, while noble palaces, magnificent churches, unrivalled public monuments, bear testimony to the graceful and sterling qualities which these races possessed; for to high courage and a noble spirit of independence, they added a gracefulness of

mind and a refined taste which taught them how to adorn the land which they created.

Fifteen centuries had elapsed since the foundations of the new country had been laid in quicksands, and her cities erected on piles, and Holland and Flanders were foremost in civilization, and in the race of commerce. Within the seventeen provinces there had grown up two hundred and eight walled cities, one hundred and fifty chartered towns, six thousand three hundred villages. They contained more than three millions of inhabitants, industrious and intellectual above all other people; and they possessed that love of liberty which commerce and art tend to cherish, while they themselves are developed by a

free and generous spirit. The flag of the Low Countries was seen in every harbour, while their manufactures rivalled, if they did not surpass, those of any other European state. Their tapestries, silks, costly hangings, and richly-woven carpets furnished the palaces of Princes, and were the boast and pride of that Sovereign whose tyranny in after years drove from their native soil those manufactures which did honour to his reign and enriched his treasury. Never was concentrated within a small space, no, not even in sunny Italy, so much greatness, such varied intelligence, such admirable industry and earnestness of purpose.

It was the sovereignty of this flourishing country which, in the great hall of the

palace at Bruxelles, was, on the 25th of October, 1555, transferred from the Emperor Charles V. to his son Philip, when a new era commenced for the Spanish Netherlands. It was a great and solemn occasion, this transfer of the lives and interests of millions. Through all the vast assemblage who thronged the hall—the nobles, the merchant-princes, the soldiers, and statesmen collected there to listen to the parting words of the great Emperor—there must have thrilled a feeling of awe at the unexampled grandeur of the spectacle, mingled with sorrow at the closing scene of a great life, even although the Emperor's rule had not been of that paternal character which it was his pleasure to affect. It is true, that in subse-

quent years, when compared with his son's, his government might have been fairly called beneficent; but viewed by the clear light of humanity, it was frequently better calculated to awaken fear than to kindle love. Dark crimes had been committed in dark ages, but it was reserved for the most enlightened Sovereign of an age that produced an Erasmus, to plant the Inquisition in a free land, and to transmit it to his son as a precious inheritance. Such an institution was a gracious return for one half of the Imperial revenue, which was the proportion drawn from the Netherlands; for of the five millions of gold derived from all sources, two millions were paid by the Low Countries; one million was drawn from Italy, one million from Sicily, half a

million from the Indies, and the same amount from Spain; and yet, oppressed and persecuted as the people had sometimes been—and amongst the people the nobility must be included—on the day of the Emperor's abdication, the greatness of the man and of the hour overpowered all the passions which persecution had aroused. It was with silent reverence the audience listened to the last words of him who had won, if not their affection, at least their admiration and respect. As the Emperor, leaning on the arm of William of Orange, stood before that august assemblage, the sympathy he aroused was electrical. Like the Apostle of old, he told them of his journeyings often, of perils in the city, of perils on the sea, in weariness and painful-

ness, in watchings often, in fastings often; he recounted his nine expeditions into Germany, six to Spain, and seven to Italy, four to France, ten to the Netherlands, two to England, and as many to Africa; and when, in conclusion, he spoke of his strength being now nought but vanity, of his failing energies and ebbing life, of his love for his people—when he boasted, with a justifiable pride, of the vast empire he was bestowing on his son, who he prayed might ever maintain the eternal principles of law and justice—and finally, when he asked them to pardon all the offences and errors he might have committed during his reign, and gave them the assurance that in every prayer to God, to whom he dedicated the remainder of his life, he would

implore His mercy for those who were so dear to him, all the past was forgotten and forgiven. At this touching appeal the oldest and the youngest present, the iron soldier and the beardless stripling, all burst into tears. "At the close of this noble oration," says Sir John Mason, "the Emperor himself wept. In my opinion not one of that noble assembly but poured forth abundant tears, and especially when he prayed them to bear with his infirmities, proceeding from his sickly age, and his mention of so tender a matter as parting from such dear and loving subjects."

He who desires fully to appreciate the splendour and glory of the Spanish Monarchy would do well to visit the gallery of Madrid. Here the gloom, the solemnity,

the stern grandeur of the men who in high places governed the vast empire, are portrayed by those masters whose own portraits have fittingly obtained a place among the sovereigns, the great captains, and the illustrious statesmen whose features have been transmitted to posterity by their pencil. There Charles V. may be seen at every period of his earnest life. When in his youth he was the rival of Francis I., and, clothed in black velvet, rode forth from Toledo to visit his prisoner in the Alcazar of Madrid; or in his hunting dress as he followed the boar among the wild sierras; or as he appeared when he entered Ghent fifteen years before his abdication, surrounded by such a cortége of goodly knights and great nobles, all so magnifi-

cently attired, that it was said such a triumphant scene the great free city had never before witnessed. The keen, clear eye, the commanding presence, the vast intelligence are faithfully delineated by that painter who was worthy, as Charles said, to be served by Cæsar. And then again he may be studied as he stood in that most eventful day of his eventful life, with the large, overhanging brow, the light hair, prematurely whitened, cut close to the head, setting forth more prominently the heavy forehead, the sunken cheeks, the proudly-curved lip which has been transmitted to the latest generation of the House of Austria, enfeebled and broken by sickness and time, but the eye still retaining the keen and penetrating glance, indicating

that imperial will which few even in its subdued expression would venture to question.

Here again we stand before Philip II., in every variety of costume and pursuit—the boy even at the earliest age portraying the man, with the same cold, sallow, pedantic, hard features which characterized him in later life; the light, sandy-coloured, yellow hair, the cold, clear, calm blue eye, the resolute expression of the Austrian lip. Whether with his gun in hand, on his war-house, or on his knees at his devotions, the qualities of his heart may be traced in every touch of the pencil. Flatter the Prince as the painter might, he could not avoid representing the nature of the man. In many of the pictures grouped around

him are found those warriors and statesmen who were conspicuous for their greatness in that court and in that age, in which so many had achieved greatness. There is Ruy Gomez, with calm and earnest expression; and Cardinal Granvella, whose astuteness and reserve, whose state-craft and resoluteness, rendered him a fitting minister for Philip, who considered that dissimulation and unforgivingness were the qualities to be most loved and cherished by princes, and approved Macchiavelli's maxim, "Qui nescit dissimulare nescit regnare." The terrible Alva may there be seen, as he rode into Brussels on his mission of blood. None can mistake the cruel, suspicious, jealous expression of his restless face; and yet all must recognize the martial appearance

of the great captain, the grace with which he seems to be reining in the prancing war-house with his bridle hand, while his right arm reposes lovingly on the shoulder of his future victim, the gentle, trusting, truthful Egmont, the hero of St. Quentin, the loved one of the people.

Nor in this glorious gallery are there wanting the more graceful features of womanhood, that form in which art loves best to embody its genius. Whether they are represented as children (if a Spanish nobility ever has a childhood), or in the bloom of their beauty, there are few pictures more full of interest than those which represent the quaintly, picturesquely-attired archduchesses and princesses of the Empire, with their dark hair and black eyes, set off by the crimson feathers

which serve to contrast and to adorn. Sometimes it is a childlike Infanta in all the glow of her youth, in rich purple embroidered velvet dress and bright plumed hat, managing her curveting jennet—

> "Mingling with the graceful infant wile,
> A mimic majesty that makes us smile."

Sometimes one of maturer years is kneeling at her *prie-dieu* with clasped hands and upturned glance, praying for that faith which claimed its victims and delighted its votaries by the fires in the Piazza of Valladolid. Whatever the picture, whatever the subject, there is always the same power of expression and the same dignity, the same admirable knowledge of art.

The history of Spanish art, as it has been so gracefully and eloquently recorded in

Stirling's annals of Spanish painters, is, in fact, the history of Spain. For the haughty grandees, the Spanish and Flemish aristocracy, live, not in the Royal gallery alone, but in the princely châteaux of the nobility. But amid all the portraits, there are few which excite greater interest than those of Egmont and Horn—an interest derived from the sadness of their fate.

Lamoral Egmont, Prince of Gavare, was descended from the ancient Frisian kings. Princely not only in his fortune and by his birth, but in his unrivalled accomplishments, and possessing those qualities which obtain the love and admiration of all around him, he was the hero of romance to the fair, "the Pride of the Palace, the Bower, and the Hall." As the memory of

Sir Philip Sidney is still dear to England—so that the highest praise which could be bestowed on one now living, who is worthy of all praise for his blameless life, was to call him the Sir Philip Sidney of our generation—just so is the memory of Egmont cherished in the Netherlands—he was the idol and the ideal of the whole nation; the conqueror of St. Quentin and of Gravelines only required the martyr's fate to elevate him to that standard of hero-worship which defies the lapse of time. Neither were personal advantages wanting to set off that grace of manner which is "beyond the reach of art." Tall, of light athletic figure, of almost feminine delicacy of feature, the soft brown kindly eye could, under excitement, kindle with unwonted

fire. He wore his hair long, having auburn locks, which won many a maiden's wishful glance. He had a gentle, persuasive voice, which could be wrought into earnest and passionate utterance when he was roused.

Egmont was the very type of chivalry. He could lay siege as successfully to hearts as to cities, and few could resist his graceful manner and winning address. Even his weaknesses of character were of such a nature that they only the more endeared him to others; but, as the event too sadly proved, he did not possess the qualities which enable a man to lead a great party in the State. There was too much gold, too little alloy, in him for the battle of life—for such a battle, at least, as he had to fight.

He was gentle and confiding, at a time when hardness and dissimulation were the qualities cherished at the Court of Spain. He had so little guile that he always believed in the truthfulness of others, and so was cruelly deceived.

His companion in life and death, as in the battle-field, was Count Horn, very different in appearance, but similar in his earnest and generous nature. Dark, heavy, gloomy, stern in its expression, his portrait greatly resembles the picture Vandyck has left us of Strafford. He was what Laud would have described as a thorough man, whom no obstacle could daunt or arrest, with that confidence in the issue of events which is commonly associated with a strong will and strong frame, but with, at the

same time, an over-reliance on his own ability and resources, which lured him to his destruction, and also led to the destruction of all those who placed their trust in his judgment and conduct.

From a sketch of those who wrestled with the power and might of Philip, William of Orange cannot be omitted, although his shrewder judgment and more cautious disposition preserved him from the fate of his comrades and friends. A calm, steady, collected, reserved nature seems to be an hereditary characteristic of the House of Orange. Even in earliest years his taciturn, almost morose character obtained for him the epithet of "the Silent." A skilful diplomatist, an able negotiator, an excellent captain and leader, whether in peace or in

war, he was able to rival Philip in his state-craft, and also in battle. And yet, respected and even loved by the nation, he failed to create that deep interest which Egmont won; and the people turned to him as their chief and guide with more of admiration than of enthusiasm, and of confidence than of love.*

Such are the pictures of some of the nobles who supported or resisted the

* "Not his the wealth to some large natures lent,
Divinely lavish, even where misspent,
That liberal sunshine of exuberant soul,
Thought, sense, affection, warming up the whole;
The heat and affluence of a genial power,
Rank in the weed, as vivid in the flower;
Hushed at command, his veriest passions halt."

These lines, from Lord Lytton's unequalled satire, "The New Timon," are very applicable to William the Silent.

tyranny of the King. These princes, grandees, and knights of the Toison d'Or were not more conspicuous in the camp and the battle-field than at the tourney and the masque, and in the splendour and extravagance of their social life. Egmont, the Lord Admiral, and William, not only vied with each other in feats of chivalry, but in the grandeur of their state and the magnificence of their entertainments; which extravagance Philip encouraged, just as Francis I. had encouraged it at the Court at Chambord—for state-craft had taught them that an impoverished nobility is generally easily governed.

The Prince of Orange lived with almost regal splendour. Nobles of rank and youths of gentle blood eagerly sought for places

in his household. Twenty cooks could not have found adequate employment had not his hospitality been unbounded. The Flemish nobility had no great love for Spanish customs or manners, but it was their pride to rival them in their grandeur. We read of entertainments which lasted many days. A table was provided daily not only for the nobility who cared to be received, but also for the very humblest of the numerous retainers.* Every one competed in the race of extravagance.

This wild, reckless revelling destroyed not only the constitutions but the fortunes of many a great prince. Prince

*This is still the case in Spain, in palaces like the Duc Ossuna's, where a table is kept every day for a fixed number of guests, even during his absence.

William, Egmont, and Horn could afford such extravagance, but they were followed and imitated by others whose fortunes were more straitened, and consequently soon exhausted, but whose names survive in the Libro d'Oro of Brussels—the De Croys, the De Lignes, the D'Arembergs. Some of the estates of this great nobility have been recovered by care and prudence, but many are still suffering from the excesses of their ancestors.

Of all histories that can be written, there is none more fraught with great and noble, terrible and sad events, than the history of religious enthusiasm. If it calls forth the highest, it also evokes the worst qualities that can influence mankind. Earnestness and wild fanaticism, self-de-

nial and selfishness, love and fear, hope and despair—all alike spring from and are blended with religious enthusiasm. It is a question which may fairly be asked, Were the great persecutors, Charles V., Philip II., Catharine de' Medici, or our own Queen Mary, naturally cruel? Did they persecute for the mere pleasure of giving pain? It is scarcely possible to imagine this to have been the case. The love of terrible excitement, which finds gratification in the suffering of others, which led the Roman people to the Coliseum, and the Paris mob to the Place de Gréve, could have had no place in the minds of Charles V., of Philip II., or Louis XIV. When we shudder at the sad scenes which desolated the Netherlands, at the

cruel policy that repealed the Edict of Nantes, it is impossible not to believe that this policy had its origin in the blind love of that faith on which the persecutors founded all their hopes of the future. To the ardent Catholic, a heretic represented everything that was most repulsive to humanity—he was the embodiment of vice and evil, and he communicated that evil to others. To extirpate and exterminate heresy seemed as much an obligation to the Catholic king as the destruction of the prophets of Baal was the duty of the favoured race. It seemed to the true son of the Church that he should remember as the first of divine precepts, that our Saviour came not to bring peace on earth, but the sword.

Thus, while we are appalled at the misery which the persecutors in the Catholic Church spread over half the civilized globe, we must not misconstrue the motives of the conduct of these champions of the Cross. In the Middle Ages, before the full light of civilization burst forth, and inculcated a greater regard for the humanities of life, it was thought that persecution was the only argument by which conviction could be enforced. Humanity is the result of progress, of science, of that sympathy which springs from the refinements of life. If any one word can be selected by which to represent the development of social good, that word is Toleration—that toleration which respects the opinions and feelings of others, and teaches

us to assert our own with diffidence—toleration which teaches men to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly, principles of conduct which truly were little understood by the Torquemadas and Tittelmanns of the sixteenth century.

The famous edict of Charles V., of 1550, re-enacted as soon as Philip came to the throne, taught the people what they had to expect from the tender mercies of their new sovereign. By this edict any lay person was forbid "to converse or dispute concerning the Holy Scriptures, or to read, teach, or expound the Scriptures; or to preach secretly or openly, or to entertain any of the opinions of the above-mentioned heretics, under the pain and penalty of execution—the men by the sword, the

women to be buried alive, if they do not persist in their errors; but if they do, they are to be executed with fire." And there follows:—

"We forbid all persons to lodge, entertain, or furnish with food, fire, or clothing, or otherwise to favour anyone notoriously suspected of being a heretic; and anyone failing to denounce any such, shall be liable to the above-mentioned punishments."

Again:—

"If anyone once generally suspected, and therefore condemned by the Spiritual Judge, shall again become suspected, or tainted with heresy, although it may not appear that he has contravened, or in any way violated any of the above-men-

tioned commands, nevertheless such person shall be considered as relapsed, and, as such, be proscribed with loss of life and property, without any hope of the mitigation of the above-mentioned penalties;" and it concluded "by forbidding anyone, of whatever condition, to ask of us, or of any having authority, to grant pardon, or to present any petition in favour of such heretics, exiles, or fugitives."

In what a different spirit did Pliny the Younger, when governor of Pontus and Bithynia, send to Trajan for instruction as to the policy he was to hold towards the Christians. He had the sagacity to know that faith is never conquered by persecution, and that it grows up under its pressure like grass beneath a stone.

While he hesitated to carry out the harsh edicts issued from Rome, he wrote as follows :—

"Suspending all judicial proceedings, I have recourse to you for advice, for it has appeared to me a matter highly deserving of consideration, especially on account of the great number of persons who are in danger of suffering for their belief; for many of all ages, of every rank, and of both sexes, are likewise accused. Nor has the contagion of this superstition seized the cities only, but also the lesser towns and the open country. Nevertheless, it seems to me that it may be restrained and corrected, and that numbers of men may be reclaimed, if pardon were granted to those who repent."

Assuredly these edicts of Philip were clear and comprehensive enough. It must be borne in mind that they were first published by Charles V. in 1550; and now, to ensure their being carried into effect, and to prove that their renewal was not merely a proof of filial duty, three new archbishoprics, and fifteen additional bishoprics, were to be created; and to each bishopric was added eight prebendaries, who were to assist in the causes of the Inquisition, two of whom themselves were to be Inquisitors.

It is difficult adequately to describe the gloom and despair which the renewal of these neglected edicts spread over the Netherlands. From that hour of deadly suspicion and terrible dread, the shadow of

death fell on the land. It was a darkness palpable, that might be felt. Fresh troops were to be the means of carrying these edicts into effect—these were the messengers of the Imperial mercies—and against these troops all the fury of the nation was now let loose. The Netherlanders threatened to break down the dykes, to level the dunes, and to restore to the sea the land that had been rescued from it, unless the edicts were withdrawn. By a refinement of cruelty, not only were these edicts calculated to decimate the population, but they spread mistrust and suspicion in every house; for they were so artfully framed, that a man's worst foes might be those of his own household.

Orange, Egmont, and Horn, the three

great names that belong not only to the history of nations, but to the history of freedom, urged upon the Regent, Margaret of Parma, and on her haughty minister, the Cardinal Granvella, that there would be a conflagration through the whole country if these edicts were put into execution. And now commenced the long contest between the allied nobles and the great Cardinal, the minister of Philip's will and the ready instrument of his persecution. Cold, calm, resolute, utterly devoid of generous sympathies, he possessed the qualities of a statesman—prudence, perseverance, and great astuteness. He had

> "That power, assumed with skill,
> That moulds another's weakness to his will."

He was endowed with a precocious talent

which, in an age when the intelligence was rapidly developed, had in early youth rendered him remarkable. At twenty Granvella is said to have been learned in civil and academical lore; at twenty-three he was a prominent member of the Council of Trent, and became soon after the intimate friend of the Emperor, and, what is remarkable, continued to be the first councillor of the son—for it rarely happens that the friends of the father are those preferred by the children.

This eminent man was the Minister, if not the chief adviser, of Philip in his Flemish policy,* and in return concentrated in his own person the hatred of

* The Cardinal, writing to Philip II., said, "Ce méchant animal nommé le peuple."

the whole nation. On his stern, determined nature all arguments failed to produce any effect. In vain did Orange, in behalf of his countryman, plead the ancient constitution of the land and the privileges of the joyful entrances; throughout the whole of the country the work of havoc commenced, and the land groaned in its agony. Granvella, in the apologies which at moments he condescended to make, denied that the Spanish Inquisition had been introduced into the country; and why not? Because Philip had told him, with a ghastly smile, that "the Netherlands Inquisition could be made much more pitiless." "The Cardinal is hated of all men," was the language used by Sir Thomas Gresham. "Hated not only by

the nobles whom he insulted, by the people whom he tortured, but also by his own familiars, and by the Regent, whom he was determined to overrule; and she, who was of a long-suffering nature, had to complain to the King that the Minister took all the affairs out of her hands."

Nothing daunted by remonstrance or by threats, Granvella pursued his own course, spreading misery around him, and denouncing the great nobles, who, if they desisted from offering an active resistance to his measures, expressed their abhorrence and indignation at these proceedings in no mild terms. But Granvella, with all his stoicism, was in no pleasant position; he could not but feel that, when all

passions were so aroused, his own life was in imminent danger. If his natural courage was proof against these terrors, he found it more difficult to endure the taunts and ridicule heaped upon him. The Flemish were always noted for their satirical disposition, and the whole wit and contempt of the nation was vented upon the Minister. Pictures of the Cardinal, epigrams, and caricatures figured on every wall. Granvella, in mentioning them to Philip, speaks of them as "these false, abominable, and infernal things." His hatred to the nobles grew more and more intense. "We shall never be masters of these provinces," he writes to Philip, "until we take off half a dozen of the heads of these Seigniors." And Philip concurred in the idea and the

policy when he replied, "The heads of salmon are of greater account than thousands of frogs."

The sentiment of loyalty, that influence which royalty exercises over the mind, the faith as it is in kings, has never been stronger than in Spain. There it might well have been said that divinity hedged the throne; and even in the Spanish Netherlands Charles V. had transmitted to his son an inheritance of deep affection and reverence. Cruel must have been the treatment and infatuated the policy that weakened this sentiment. It was not until the pride, the bigotry, and reckless hardihood of Granvella left them no alternative, that the Seigniors formed themselves into a league against him, and that

the three leaders, William of Orange, Egmont, and Horn, signed the memorable letter to the King which was to prove fatal to the two latter. In this letter they reviewed the whole of the Cardinal's policy; they implored the King to apply a remedy to the evil, which was of such magnitude as to render all good government impossible. That the great Seigniors, and most of the illustrious men in the country, were persuaded that the Cardinal's policy, if persisted in, would be the ruin of the Spanish Netherlands. They added that neither their reputations nor their interest in the public service would allow them to act any longer with the Minister, and they asked for permission to retire from the service of the State. The letter

was a dignified remonstrance against intolerable wrong, which it was the duty of the Council of State to submit to the King; but moderate as it was, many of the nobility, amongst whom were Count d'Aremberg and Baron Berlaymont, declined to affix their signatures to the document.

A sovereign of the nature and character of Philip could not be remonstrated with with impunity. In no country was etiquette and reserve towards the sovereign carried to so great an extent as in Spain. To a Spanish sovereign the mildest of petitions that could be drawn up by subjects appeared an insolence not to be tolerated. The terrors of the Inquisition, the sorrow and the misery of the

land, were great, but the dread of irritating one who never forgave, the keenness of whose resentments was well known, and whose nature could be discerned in his cold, stern, uncompromising glance, was still greater. Moreover, as was truly said of Berlaymont, he liked to swim in two waters, and hoped to gain the goodwill of the King, without losing the friendship of the nobles. The letter, or remonstrance, was forwarded to the King, who kept it three months without any acknowledgment of its reception; and when he did deign any reply, it was curtly to inform the petitioners that Granvella was to remain at his post.

The Cardinal, after the failure of the Seigniors to obtain his removal, grew

daily more ostentatious and insolent. He affected a magnificence that far surpassed that of the Duchess in equipages and liveries; the splendour of his household cast the princely state maintained by Orange entirely into the shade; and yet, as has been already remarked, the nobility of the Spanish Netherlands were second to none in the grandeur of their display.

It was reserved for a very ordinary man, the Treasurer Grobbendock, to give the death-blow to the Cardinal's ostentation by that ridicule which is frequently a more powerful weapon than any sword. "Words wound more than swords," says the well-known Spanish proverb.

In December, 1563, a grand banquet

was given by the Treasurer; and there it was proposed that a dress should be invented which, from its coarseness and mean appearance, should be the greatest possible contrast to the magnificence of the Cardinal. Uproarious was the festival, and wild with riot became the assembly which was to invent the new livery of party and of freedom. Even in this hour of their revelry, so dangerous did the jest seem to the guests, that it was decided they should cast lots for the perilous honour of the invention. The lot fell upon Egmont. At the moment he must have felt how imminent was the danger. He was staking his life on that throw of the die—"Periculosæ plenum opus aleæ." As Motley observes, he incurred a greater risk

on that night than he did at Saint Quentin or at Gravelines. Egmont rose and proposed that from that day forth all their retainers should wear a gown of the coarsest grey mixture, a fool's cap and bells embroidered on the sleeves, with the shape of the Cardinal's dress carefully imitated. The proposition was hailed with delight, and the party broke up in eager haste to carry out the idea. The very next day the rough grey coats, with their strange adornments, were seen all over Brussels. The mob eagerly adopted the idea, and assumed the fool's cap and bells—the cap made to represent the Cardinal's hat. Wherever the Minister turned, he was met with this evidence of his unpopularity. Bitter, indeed, was the jest,

and deeply did it rankle in his breast. There was no retort to it possible. The insult had to be borne, and it was borne sullenly and revengefully in the heart of the minister, but from that hour the doom of Egmont was sealed.

Whatever the ultimate consequences of this satire on the Cardinal, its immediate effects were all that its inventors could desire. After an effort to brave the ridicule and the insult to which he was exposed, Granvella found himself compelled to retire. He did so on the plea of requiring rest, and left Brussels under the pretence of returning after his restoration to health. But the people were not deceived, and the demonstrations of delight with which they saw him depart

were unbounded. With the retirement of the Minister, the persecutions did not, however, cease. The Regent herself remonstrated with the King against the severity of the Inquisition; for she had become seriously alarmed at the power given to the Inquisitors.

In August, 1564, the King insisted on the publication of new edicts, by which the authority of the Inquisition was still further increased, and new pains and penalties were provided against heretics.

These new edicts enforced the old in terms of additional severity. The Regent felt the danger of adding to the agitation and indignation that prevailed all through the country. She determined, therefore, to despatch a special embassy to the Court of Madrid,

to expostulate with the King, and Egmont, the popular and chivalrous, but, unfortunately, the inventor of the fool's cap, was invited by the Regent to undertake this dangerous mission. He was urged to make the attempt to turn the heart of the King, and, in the presence of the tyrant himself, to defend the liberties of the people. Nothing could demand greater hardihood than this; but if Egmont was the bravest of the brave, he was also vain and self-confident, and he accepted the important post.

In this the generosity, but also the weakness, of Egmont's nature appeared. Orange and Horn both implored him well to consider the risk he was incurring; but Egmont was one of those happily-constituted men who are able to follow the

advice of the Greek poet, to live from day to day, and to enjoy the light of each hour, knowing that it will never return. Because he was popular and fascinating, he was over-confident in his powers of persuasion. In former days Philip was pleased with his reckless, joyous mood; and he felt convinced that, once in the Royal presence, he should be able to disarm the King's resentment, and win him to a different policy by the eloquence of his persuasions. It was unfortunate that Egmont, from his earliest youth, had been accustomed to inordinate flattery and adulation, which would have proved fatal to the energy of his character had his nature been less loving and simple; but he never contemplated the contingency of disappointment

and misfortune, and could ill bear it when it arrived. To be the principal actor in great scenes, to be admired and caressed, was the habit of his life, and he revelled in the delight of such an existence. This, he felt, was a splendid occasion, worthy of his romantic, energetic nature. It would be his mission to cement rival parties, to destroy animosities, to restore peace to his country, to win back the alienated affection of the monarch, and to unite the hearts of the sovereign and the people.

Nor was Egmont insensible to the importance of removing from the mind of the King the evil impressions conveyed to him by Granvella. But his hope of doing so was founded on a very false

estimate of Philip's character; and his frank and generous disposition could not realise the cold, false, unmerciful, unforgiving temper of the King. There is a class of men—and to that class Egmont belonged—who make their inspirations and impressions their guides in life, whose wishes father their convictions, and who, however frequently duped, are still ever the willing victims of any who choose to practise on their credulity.

Egmont left Brussels, escorted by a brilliant cortége of his friends—those choice and gallant spirits of which he was the chief. The cities he passed through vied with each other in doing honour to him who represented the chivalry of the Netherlands. His progress through the country

was one prolonged triumph. Crowds collected on his passage to gaze on the man who had added so many pages to the glorious annals of Spanish history, who had defeated the great Constable Montmorency, the flower of the French nobility, and an army that was deemed invincible. No hero ever received a warmer welcome, or was bid a more affectionate farewell. Still, among his friends there existed an uneasiness which found no response in Egmont's sanguine mind. Before they finally parted, Orange, Mansfeld, Colemburg, and others signed a document with their blood, in which they expressed their very great and singular affection for Egmont, and declared that, should any harm happen to him, they would, on their faith as gentlemen

and honourable cavaliers, take vengeance on any actors in such deed of violence.

But for the time there were no clouds on the horizon. To Egmont all around looked calm and fair. There are moments in the lives of men when hope tells its own flattering tale, and they believe that the golden promise of the morning will be fulfilled in the beauty of the noon-day. The young and the sanguine see a silver lining beneath every cloud, and stars beyond the darkness.

The enthusiasm with which Egmont was welcomed at Madrid almost equalled that which he had excited in the Netherlands. The grandees of Spain, the highest dignitaries of the Court, the favoured of the sovereign, greeted him on his arrival. His

military reputation won for him the interest of the men, and that curiosity which is akin to tenderer feelings, the admiration of the haughty Spanish beauties. Surrounded by a most brilliant circle, he rode direct to the palace. The haughty reserve, the cold, formal etiquette of the Court of Madrid was broken through on the present occasion, and the placid, phlegmatic Philip actually descended into the great court of the palace to welcome this favourite of fortune. The King fell on his neck, and held him in a long embrace, nor was he permitted to kiss the royal hand. He was ushered into the splendid reception-rooms by the King himself. When he left the palace, every head was uncovered and bowed low to him whom the King so

delighted to honour. The officers of state were ordered to attend on the princely Fleming, as if he were allied to the royal blood of Spain; and the grandees endeavoured to show that they well knew the worth of him who had added so proud a chapter to Spanish history.

All these attentions were accompanied with a stateliness of manner and a dignity of mien which must a little have surprised, and may have somewhat inconvenienced, the reckless, careless band of friends who had accompanied Egmont; nor did the princely welcome terminate with the day of Egmont's arrival. For many successive days the King seemed to have no pleasure and interest but in Egmont's society. He took him in his own carriage, and as they

drove through the streets of Madrid, the population stood in wonder, gazing on the remarkable man who seemed to influence and subdue him whom none ventured to address without fear; and yet there was one, Ruy Gomez, who well understood the King, and knew that this flattering reception was only an additional proof of his matchless duplicity and perfidy; for while the Minister was listening with respectful attention to every word that fell from Egmont, while in his daily walks and drives he seemed desirous of proving to the people how great was the man who was thus preferred by the King, and while he loaded him with gifts worthy of a prince, he knew that he was all the time lulling into a false security one who was doomed to destruction. And how could Egmont,

thus caressed and flattered, avoid the intoxication of such triumph? Is it surprising that he should have written to assure his friends in the Netherlands that the King's character had been maligned; that there was no one more generous in his princely nature, or richer in the heart's best endowments, than Philip II.?

Days, weeks, months sped by, and still Egmont's mission of mercy was unfulfilled —it might almost have been said was not commenced. He had been sent to Madrid to plead the cause of his countrymen, and while he was feasting and revelling, many of them were languishing in the dungeons of the Inquisition. Whenever the envoy endeavoured to introduce the subject of the persecuted and suffer-

ing, the Sovereign lightly and playfully turned it aside; for he had soon found that a flattering compliment, a pleasant remark, was the most effectual mode of meeting Egmont's arguments. The utmost Egmont could obtain from the King before he took his departure was the promise that "the Duchess Regent should see whether there might not be some new way devised to treat heretics." Egmont construed this into a merciful assurance, and declared himself satisfied. Thus by vanity was the strong man overcome, and the victor at St. Quentin became the conquered at Madrid.

The astute monarch kept up the delusion in Egmont's mind until the very last. Before he departed, a magnificent tourna-

ment was given in his honour; the galleries for the spectators were hung with rich tapestries and cloth of gold; the grandees appeared with unusual pomp, their retainers dressed in the splendid bravery which on occasions of state the Spanish nobility knew so well how to assume. There was collected all that Madrid possessed of loveliness, and when Egmont rode into the lists, universal acclamation pronounced him to be the noblest cavalier of whom the Spanish monarchy could boast. How his heart must have beat with rapture and his cheek flushed with pride, as, in the presence of all the greatness, wealth, and beauty of the city, the King showed how highly he esteemed him who had added so much to the glory

of a nation already so rich in fame; and when Egmont at last took his leave of Madrid, the King, by a most exceptional honour, accompanied him for a short distance on his journey, surrounded by the highest dignitaries of the Court. On parting, the Monarch tenderly embraced him, and left him, as he expressed it, "the most contented man alive." Many, doubtless, were his contemplations of gratified ambition as he rode through the beautiful glades which surrounded the then rising Escorial—that palace which the gratitude of Philip was erecting to commemorate the great victory by which Egmont had illustrated his reign. Across the wide plains, rich with wild and variegated flowers, over the rugged sierras, the gallant caval-

cade passed; for until he left the Spanish soil, some of the Spanish nobility attended on him. Down the hill passes, from every hamlet, crowds in holiday attire flocked to gaze on the popular hero. He might, indeed, well be the most contented man alive—it was the hour of his glory, of his pride, of his triumph. The atmosphere around was bright, sunny, and golden; there was but one black cloud, and that had settled on his native land.

And soon Egmont found himself entering into that cloud of gloom and sorrow. His return was a strange and painful contrast to his triumphant departure. It would be difficult to describe the disappointment which followed on the confirmation by himself of the rumours that had

preceded him of the entire failure of his mission of mercy, and the throb of affection was changed to bitterness when Egmont was heard to extol the princely qualities of his royal master. The atmosphere of the Spanish Court still clung to him; he seemed to hear the voice of acclamation and the shout of exultation at his approach, and that gentle courtesy for which he was so well beloved was exchanged for a manner somewhat assuming and imperious. He forgot the Latin poet's advice—

> "In too full wind
> Take in the swelling sail."

"He talks like a king," said Morillon; "negotiates all night and day, and makes all bow before him." His palace was now

crowded by obsequious courtiers, and even the Regent Duchess did homage to the brilliant favourite.

But the evil dream—for it was, however brightly coloured, truly an evil dream—did not long endure. The awakening soon came. Egmont was too generous, and his patriotism too great, for his heart long to be deadened by inordinate vanity; and, moreover, many things occurred to prove to him how wise was the Psalmist when he gave the counsel "to place no faith in princes." The same generous nature which made him the ready dupe of royal cunning aroused his indignation when, so far from the quality of mercy being exercised towards the suffering, the terrible edicts were again repub-

lished, and fresh orders arrived that, to prevent in future the odium of public executions, heretics were to be drowned in the dungeons at midnight in tubs of water.

Once more Orange, Egmont, and Horn were united in their determination, by all fair means, to defeat this execrable tyranny. Egmont mourned over his past weakness, and he resolved to atone for his momentary deviation from the paths of patriotism. He felt that he had been shamefully duped, but fortunately the veil was withdrawn before the hearts of his devoted friends and adherents had been finally alienated from him; and now, in every city, in every village, the determination to resist these new edicts was spreading.

The ruin which was caused by this tyranny might be seen in the deserted, grass-grown streets of the great manufacturing cities, and in the number of emigrants who were crowding to the sea-shore, to seek for peace beyond the waves. Still there was wanting just one of those incidents which set a country in flames when the fire has been long smouldering. History can afford frequent examples of how many revolutions, how many great movements, have owed their origin to some apparently most trifling event or careless word. Maddened as the people were at the treatment to which they had been so long subjected, it is still probable that the overt acts of resistance would have been delayed, had not a rallying cry suddenly arisen.

A petition or request for redress of grievances had been presented to the Regent. It was not signed by either of the three great leaders, Orange, Egmont, or Horn, but the majority of the nobles, with Brederode at their head, affixed their names to it, and entering Brussels in procession, followed by a great retinue, presented it to Her Highness. The Duchess Regent trembled with indignation at the bold terms in which the petition was couched, and at the commanding attitude of the Confederates, as they were styled. One of the few servile courtiers who still adhered to the Court, *per fas et nefas*, uttered the fatal, memorable, never-to-be-forgotten words, "What fears your Highness from these beggars (*Gueux*)?"

That same evening there was a grand banquet at Brederode's. The popular cause was pledged in goblets of the choicest wines. The enthusiasm and excitement rose to fever heat. In the midst of the revelry Brederode rose. The windows of the old hall had been thrown open, so that the crowd outside might hear the speeches of these patriotic carousers. Brederode stood up amid vociferous applause. He recounted the insult which the nobles and the whole nation had received, the Regent not having expressed her disapprobation of the contemptuous expression. Then he exclaimed,

"Yes! We are the beggars.' Let it be so. Beggars we will remain until we are free! Here is a beggar's wallet!"

He pulled forth one with which he had provided himself, and filled it with wine to the brim. "Let us drink success to the beggars!" he exclaimed. "Long live the beggars!—*vivent les gueux!*"

Then a cry arose that echoed through the old hall, was caught up by the excited crowd, carried through street and square to the palace, and borne onward from village to village, to the distant plains of the beloved Fatherland—"*Vivent les gueux!*" A cry once raised never to die out, until their liberties were recovered on the battle-field, and after many a long enduring siege—a cry more powerful to raise the hearts of men than the alarm-bell rung on the watch-tower —than even the iron tongue of the famous

Roland. The people wanted a watch-word —a rallying cry. They had at last found one. To the hearts of every class glowing with any national sentiment that watch-word appealed. They had long required some symbol of union, some outward sign of the sympathy that united every age; and that symbol in a few days would be borne by all. *Vivent les gueux!* Through the long night the whole city rang with the shout. The burghers opened their windows, and re-echoed it back again. A spell had been evoked which was to arouse the most cowardly; and "Vive le Roi!" was replaced by the war-cry of the people.

But if the effect on the nation of this cry was so great, it was so likewise on the evil

rulers of the land. Orange, Egmont, and Horn had not signed the request, had not joined in the procession, had not been present when the evil epithet was pronounced, had not attended at the banquet; for on that day they were dining with Count Mansfeld, where they heard of the tumult, and, curious to become acquainted with the cause, they went to the council-chamber. Immediately they were surrounded by maddened revellers, who compelled them to drink from the wallet filled with wine amid the shouts of the people. Expostulation was vain, and, at that moment of excitement, even dangerous; so they pledged a health to the beggars. A few months later, and Egmont and Horn expiated on the scaffold the shouts raised on that night of revel.

Fearfully and swiftly the movement sped on! There arose races of real beggars, with names of terrible import; there were the "Wild Beggars," the "Wood Beggars," the "Beggars of the Sea." And then came that which is the terrible result of all revolution, the dread of which induces moderate and thoughtful men to bear so much with patience—the league of all that was extravagant and evil with all that was noble and patriotic. The lover of justice and of vengeance mingled together; the plunderer and the redresser of great wrong united their ranks; everything was prepared for the storm, and it burst at last. At this time it must be said that every effort was made to induce the King to mitigate the severity of the

edicts; and the only mitigation vouchsafed was that hanging was in certain cases to replace burning and drowning. When this became known, the indignation was unbounded, and at the war-cry of "*Les Gueux*," towns and villages rose in arms. Sad was it, indeed, that, in the determination to overthrow everything that could remind the people of the odious tyranny to which they had been subjected, so much that was beautiful in art, profane as well as sacred, suffered. Vengeance knows no distinctions. Revolutions are not guided by silken threads. The savage bigotry of those who, in the name of the Faith, had violated all the principles of mercy and justice, and had sown the seeds of the Gospel in blood, devastated

the land. Well might the Netherlanders have exclaimed—

> "Crucified, crucified, every morn,
> Beaten with stripes and crowned with thorn,
> Spurned and spat on, and drenched with gall,
> Brothers, how long will ye bear this thrall?
> Mary of Magdalene, Peter, and John,
> Answer the question, and pass it on."

The question was asked and passed on, and the answer may be seen even now in the ruins of many a noble monument and exquisite shrine. No country was richer than the Netherlands in beautiful specimens of ecclesiastical architecture. Monasteries and churches, on which the accumulated wealth of ages had been lavished, existed not only in every city, but in towns of little pretension. If ever

there was a country that certified, by its many temples reared to God, to the Christian spirit of the people, it was that land that had been rendered homeless. But now the hour of retribution had arrived, and the waters, so long pent up, swelled and burst forth with a violence which no force could restrain. The tempest swept over magnificent cathedrals, the ancient monasteries, the once loved and now desolated shrines. The mob rose to the work of destruction. These wild, passion-driven beggars overran the land. Altar, shrine, and tomb shared the same fate. All love and reverence for that faith which had been represented by an army of cruel, remorseless inquisitors seemed to have passed away, and the ravages that met the eye

on all sides were symbolical of the entire destruction of men's hopes. Sculpture of admirable grace, in which many an incident of the Christian Church had been represented by a master hand; pictures of priceless value, the offerings of fervent hearts, placed in chapels of exquisite architecture, were destroyed in the wild confusion that prevailed. Nor was this great vengeance vented alone on inanimate objects. Vainly did the inquisitors and their agents plead for mercy; the fire and the sword spread havoc over the country, and completed its devastation. The spoilers did their work well. Scarcely one church or one abode of tyranny was left uninjured. The glorious creations of ages were levelled to the ground in a few

days of vengeance and excitement. *

For a time, and but for a brief time only, the result was favourable to the Reformers. In the greatness of her alarm the Duchess Regent proclaimed liberty of worship, and articles of agreement were drawn up between the King's government and Louis of Nassau. A treaty was signed by the Duchess, by which she undertook that the Inquisition should be abolished, and edicts were published granting pardon for all past offences. Among the leaders who were omitted from this

* They broke every image, chaunting the Ten Commandments in Marot's verse:—

Tailler ne te fera image,
Quelque chose que ce soit,
S'y l'honneur luy fais en hommage,
Le Boz dieu jalousie en reçoit.

act of grace were Orange, Egmont, and Horn. None had more strenuously opposed these acts of violence, or had taken more active steps to arrest the progress of this wild anarchy; but, notwithstanding, against none was Philip's indignation more excited than against these eminent Seigniors.

"By the soul of my father, it shall cost them dear!" he exclaimed.

Nothing but evil was thought of men who had ventured to expostulate against the barbarities of a sovereign who expounded the faith of Christ by hangings, burnings, and drownings.

The naturally suspicious and jealous nature of the King was increased by the accounts he received from the Regent of the

progress of the insurrection. She chose to believe, against all the evidence of facts, that Orange, Egmont, and Horn were not in earnest in their efforts to suppress the insurrection. Every act of their lives was viewed through a false and distorted medium; but the time was now fast approaching when it was necessary for those who valued their safety to take some decided step. There were rumours of a Spanish army preparing for an immediate occupation of the Netherlands; it was reported that the renowned Spanish infantry were to be made use of as the instruments of Royal vengeance. It was incumbent on the great Seigniors to adopt one of two courses—either to support with heart and soul the Royal authority, and the ty-

ranny that had been so long exercised under that authority; or, while restraining the wild and flagrant excesses of the excited populace, to organize at once some effectual plan of resistance to the Royal forces. Orange was keenly alive to the importance of the crisis. From the first he had mistrusted all the promises of the King; he had long and thoroughly studied that false, cunning nature, cold as ice, and as treacherous. He urged on Egmont and Horn that now was the moment to organize a confederacy which would strike terror to the hearts of the King and his evil counsellors. But Egmont's mind misgave him; he lost energy and confidence at the moment that energy and confidence were most required. Where was

the sword that he had drawn at Saint Quentin?—where was the arm that had shattered the army at Gravelines? The sword was idle in the scabbard, and the arm was wasted! Egmont never possessed the prudence, the calm determination of Orange; he was the spoilt darling of fortune, the child of impulse, and he believed in fickle fortune. He always preferred a temporizing policy—that policy *quæ neque amicos parat neque inimicos tollit.* He still trusted in Philip, even in the face of an intercepted letter from Alva, which was shown to him by Orange, in which he says to the Regent, "Your Highness may rest assured that they"—that is, Orange, Horn, and Egmont—"will be the first on whom His Majesty will seize,

not to confer benefits on them, but to chastise them as they deserve. Your Highness, however, should show no symptom of your displeasure, but must constantly encourage the idea that His Majesty considers them the most faithful of his servants. While they are persuaded of this they can be the more easily used, but when the time comes they will be treated in another manner."

The authenticity of this letter was questioned by Egmont; but authentic or not, it so clearly defined the royal policy, and was so much in accordance with the character of the King, that it might well have suggested danger to any nature less credulous than his. From this time the course pursued by Egmont and Orange

was entirely different. Egmont offered the King the renewal of his assurances of loyalty, and hoped to atone, by his promises of fidelity, for any past shortcomings. Horn, who implicitly followed the advice of Egmont, separated himself also from Orange, but not being of so sanguine a nature, he declined to give the King any fresh assurances of loyalty; and he retired into the desert, as he styled his home at Weert.

The crisis which Orange had foreseen was now fast approaching. A step was taken by Philip which at once placed those who held any office under the Crown in a most critical and responsible position. A test oath was imposed on all in authority, from the governors of provinces

to the lowest subordinates; each was required to swear that he would obey the orders of the Government everywhere, and against every person, without any restriction or limitation. Orange declined to comply with this tyrannical edict, and immediately on its publication he resigned all his offices; while Egmont, to give proofs of his loyalty, and in his anxiety to win the renewed affections of his Royal master, was assisting at the blockade of Valenciennes. In this hour of the fair city's bondage and affliction, the chimes of the exquisitely-carved belfry played Marot's hymn—"My God! my God! why hast Thou forsaken me?" For now the people knew not whom to trust. Egmont had deserted their cause; Orange

was about to depart for ever. The lights of Heaven were one by one going out.

Before the final step was taken, and Orange parted from those with whom for so many years he had contended for the right and had resisted evil, one more effort was made by the Prince to win Egmont back to that cause with which his honour and glory was associated. His love for him had struck too deep roots in his heart to allow of his leaving him to what he felt to be certain destruction. He made another appeal to him, and this last interview is beautifully described by Motley. Egmont, having spoken with confidence of the Royal clemency, "Alas! Egmont," answered the Prince, "the King's clemency, of which you boast, will destroy you. Would

that I might be deceived, but I foresee too clearly that you are to be the bridge which the Spaniards will destroy as soon as they have passed over you to invade our country."

With these last solemn words, he concluded his appeal to awaken the Count from his false security. Then, as if persuaded that he was looking upon his friend for the last time, William of Orange threw his arms round Egmont, and held him for a moment in a close embrace. Tears fell from the eyes of both at this parting moment, and then the brief scene of simple and lofty pathos terminated. Egmont and Orange separated from each other, never to meet again on earth. Nor did Orange, even after his departure, rest

satisfied with the efforts he had made to save his friend. He wrote to Egmont and Horn, exhorting them by every argument, by every appeal to reason and to conscience, to rise to the height of the crisis, and to save their country before it was too late. But the letters had no more effect than the earnest language Orange had used. The false security of Egmont baffled all argument and sense; and not satisfied with sacrificing himself, he persuaded Horn to withdraw from his retirement, and to cast in his fortunes with his own. When the light that is within us is darkness, how great is that darkness!

Assuredly it was almost impossible to fathom the depths of Philip's treachery.

In December, 1566, he wrote to Egmont in the following terms:—

"My Cousin,—I have received your letter of the 16th of November, in which you obscure that it has reached you, that there are some here who speak ill of, and calumniate you, and you fear these ill words may have reached me.

"As to which I am most willing to reply to you. It is not a new thing that where there are many heads there will be many discoveries; but you may be well assured that whatever may reach my ears, the door of my heart will be ever open to you, and that I shall never be persuaded of anything to the discredit of such as you, of your high quality and place. And being as you

are a most loyal and faithful servant, and having done so many great and good services, as I truly hope you will continue to perform, thereby alleviating great evils, which exist around you; so that on my arrival, which I shall endeavour to accelerate as much as possible, no fresh troubles shall unsettle your government . . . . He then continues: "I will act in accordance with your prayers, ever ruling in my country with benignity and clemency, my constant object being to act with affection and not with harshness, so that I trust to avoid giving pain, and that I shall be able to arrive unaccompanied by an army."

And again the King writes on the 26th March, 1567, after Egmont had renewed his oath:—

"My Cousin,—As you will read what I have written to my sister, the Duchess, there is less reason to reply to your letter of the 4th of this month, except to express the pleasure it has given me that you have renewed your oath. Not that it was in any way required of you, but for the good example you have given to others.

"Nor has it afforded me less pleasure to hear of all your services, and of the assistance you have rendered to my sister, for which I gratefully thank you.

"And I pray, my cousin, God guard you in his holy keeping!

"Madrid, 26th of March, 1567."

And yet a man of less shrewdness than

Egmont, despite the astuteness of the King, might have seen that the end was drawing near. After the departure of Orange, there was nothing to arrest the new reign of terror. The angel of destiny hovered over every house, and desolated every home. Cruelty now invented arts to torture the victims of tyranny; fresh edicts were published, and these permitted no hope of escape. The list of those to be condemned to death by hanging or drowning, comprised all ministers and teachers of religion; all persons whose houses had ever been used for preachings; all parents or masters whose children, or servants, had attended such meetings; all persons who were heard to sing any hymn or sacred poem; all those, other than Catholic priests, who ever bap-

tized children; all who bought or sold any Protestant book; all who sneered at priests or ecclesiastics; in a word, all who breathed or had their being in the free country of the Netherlands. And to crown this column of iniquity, any person who should aid and abet another in leaving the country was subjected to the same penalties.

Such was the gentle mercy in which Egmont and Horn had confided—such was the faith in Christ, as it was represented to the people by Philip II.; and now, when, partly owing to the hero of St. Quentin, all revolt was quelled, no tocsin was rung—no requiem for the dead was sung. The stillness of a terrible, inexpressible destiny filled the air; the bird of

night sat brooding o'er the grave, and all was hushed in the solemn silence of death. At this moment it was, when all occasion for the use of force was at an end, a grand drama was to be enacted—a Spanish army was to appear on the scene, surrounded with all the pride, and pomp, and power of the State. The Church militant was at last to obtain its visible triumph—the cross was to be borne aloft by a Spanish general; the banner which had for the time been trodden under foot by the excited people was again to be raised on high as the oriflamme of kingly power: ten thousand veterans, the flower of the matchless Spanish infantry, the finest troops Spain could produce, were to march forth on this Christian mission, commanded by

the Duke of Alva in person—he whose name was terrible to humanity.

The portrait of Ferdinando Alvarez de Toledo, Duke of Alva, may be seen in many a Spanish gallery, and none can pass it by without remarking its striking features. He was the very type of a Spanish grandee, calm, collected, haughty, and cold; always with that conscious dignity which imposes on beholders. He possessed the same concentrated manner which characterized his royal master. His sunken cheeks told of many a midnight watching; a keen suspicious glance made men at once dislike and dread him. He is described as even more haughty than Philip himself; he addressed everyone in the second person plural, and insisted on his right of

being always covered in the royal presence.

To do the Duke justice, his qualities were of that proportion which entitled them to the epithet of great. Few men have left a reputation for more heartless cruelty, few were more avaricious, few more vindictive, only one more treacherous. At the same time, as a general he stood unrivalled; he was considered one of the greatest captains Spain had ever produced. From the time he fought at Fontarabia, when a mere boy, until the passage of the Elbe and the battle of Mühlberg, he was the popular hero of Castilian story; but in the earlier days of his wild and stormy career, there were gentler passages of life worthy of record.

In early life he married one of the proud Castilian beauties whose charms Spanish art has transmitted to posterity. Soon after his marriage he rode from Hungary to Madrid and back in seventeen days, for the sake of a few hours interview with his young wife; but in late years all the gentleness of his nature changed to harshness, and nothing had so much effect in leading to that change as the growing popularity of Egmont. It may be said of some men that, if they never forgive an enemy, at least they never forget a friend; but Alva never forgave a friend, if that friend stood in the way of his ambition; and he had learned from his master that royal quality of dissimulation, so that he was able up to the last moment to dis-

guise his resentment; or even, like Judas, he was prepared to betray with a kiss. Indeed, no man could have been found more admirably suited for the part he had to play, combining, as he did, in his own person, all the qualities which enable men to overrule, to betray, to flatter, and to destroy those whom they hate.

The force which embarked at Carthagena on the 10th of May, was worthy of a nobler cause—worthy of the palmiest days of Spain. There were only thirteen hundred cavalry; the remainder was composed of the famous Spanish infantry. In all, they amounted to ten thousand troops—a little army, including men who had won many a victory, and who had served in every part of Europe. They had fought

under the Emperor, under Alva himself, and not a few under Egmont. Lombardy, Sardinia, Sicily, and Naples furnished each a regiment; they wore gilded armour, and were magnificent in their equipment. No troops had a greater sense of their importance, and justly so. Their march was stately, their bearing worthy of men accustomed to conquer. Each soldier was attended by a servant, who was himself fitted for any service.

These select troops were commanded by the greatest generals who had served under Alva; the cavalry by his son, Don Ferdinando de Toledo, Prior of the Knights of St. John. The other generals were Don Sancho de Lodrono, Don Gonzalo de Bracamonte, Alfonso de Ulloa, all officers of note.

There was Vitelli, Marquis of Cetona, of the highest repute in the camp and in the court; and Monchagone, the bravest of the brave. Each of these generals was surrounded by a staff of young nobles, who thought it the highest honour and privilege to serve under Alva—many of them reckless, wild, and extravagant, who hoped that such a holy crusade against the heretics would cover a multitude of sins.

Thus they issued forth from the gates of Madrid in magnificent array. Everywhere, as they passed, crowds of *contadini* gazed with awe and astonishment on the glorious pageant, and prayed for the holy cause. They embarked on the fleet of thirty-seven galleys commanded by Andrea Doria, amid the acclamations of the thou-

sands that lined the shores, and who wished them God-speed in their work of destruction.

It must have been a spirit-stirring sight to have watched this great force arrayed in all the pride and pomp and circumstance of war. As it wended its way through the almost inaccessible defiles of Mont Cenis, the June sun was reflected on the glittering helmets, and the forests of lances and spears; the wild mountain pass echoed back the trumpet call, and the lions and castles of Castille floated on the Alpine heights. The eternal snows were trodden by those whose experience was bounded by the fair gardens of Southern Italy or the rich plains of Andalusia, and who now for the first time

gazed on these mysterious passes, fathomless quarries, giddy precipices, and rugged defiles, where, had treachery existed, a few determined men might have defied a whole army. From the precipices of the Alps they descended into the plains, traversed Burgundy and Lorraine; and the imposing array, if not welcomed cordially by the people, was regarded with that awe which commands respect.*

* The following lines prove how well the commissariat was supplied:—

"Y por que la Savoya es montanosa,
Y an de passar por ella las legiones,
Seria la passada trabajosa;
Si a la gente faldano provisiones,
El real commissario no reposo
Haye clevar de Italiâ numiciones
Tantas que proveyo todo el camîno,
Que jamas falto el pan, el carno y vino."

The army was accompanied in its march by a strong force of French troops on the one flank, and of Swiss on the other, who were alike mistrustful of the object of the expedition, and feared some unknown danger from such a host. Alva had despatched couriers to Brussels, with assurances as to the pacific purposes of his mission; but all his protestations were of little avail to prevent suspicion of his motives, for he was too well known to be practical in the school of diplomacy, and

> As the proud and glittering legions
> March through Savoy's mountain regions,
> But for well-arranged supplies,
> Greater still their difficulties.
> The commissariat never tire
> And that toiling troops require;
> Bread and meat and wine cups free,
> Are the gift of Italy.

the poor people of the Netherlands had little doubt of the objects of this armament. All who had anything to lose endeavoured to escape before the arrival of the tyrant; for it was wisely foreseen that afterwards retreat would be hopeless. There was one man, however, who had no doubt, no mistrust—who was still under the spell of that wonderful fascination—who, influenced by overweening vanity, declined to escape, and even counselled others like Horn to remain. This was Egmont.

On the 19th of August the force arrived at a dense forest on the frontier of Luxembourg. This was the most hazardous part of the march; it was but two leagues in width, but very dense, and the passes

were so narrow that an insignificant force might have opposed a successful resistance to the best organized army. Had Egmont been at this time at the head of the confederacy, Alva's force might have been annihilated, or compelled unconditionally to surrender; but his fatal irresolution and weakness was destined to last to the end. The next day the army crossed the frontiers and entered Thionville.

At Thionville he was waited on by Berlaymont and Noircarmes, ambassadors sent by the Regent to welcome the man whom, of all others, she most hated. But she knew the determination of the King, and the necessity of accepting the position, however painful. Arrived at Tirlemont on the 22nd of August, to the

astonishment of the whole staff it was announced to Alva that Egmont was in attendance. For the moment the proud Spaniard could not conceal his triumph, and the expression of his hatred, which it is said betrayed itself by a very incautious speech. A guard attended Egmont, but were ordered to retire to a distance; while the Count approached his rival, now the arbiter of his fate. But for the blind infatuation of Egmont, he would have detected, in all the precautions by which he was surrounded, in the jealous attention to which he found himself subjected, and in the studied courtesy of the courtiers, that some danger menaced him. He approached Alva with an expression of mistrust which the astute diplomatist detected;

and instantly the varied emotions which his features had portrayed were quelled, and were succeeded by the bluntness of the cavalier. He hastened to remove any unfavourable impressions, and at once affected a grave and genial manner, bidding Egmont welcome with all the courtesy he deigned his friends. With the most courtly of all courtesy, that of the Castilian noble, he passed his arm round the Count's neck in a loving, familiar manner; and, to the astonishment and dismay of the vast crowd that thronged the streets of Brussels, they seemed to be brothers in arms. Egmont's countenance wore the sunny smile of his earlier and happier days; he seemed as though he thought that he had gained a triumph over that cold and iron nature,

and could win his favour, as he supposed he had won that of his royal master. But great as were Alva's powers of dissimulation, he could not conceal a certain uneasiness. Egmont failed to communicate his confidence to the people. There were ominous mutterings as the Spanish troops marched through the streets. The proud veterans gazed with undisguised contempt on the light cavalry and the burgher guards who were drawn up to receive them. Between Spain and the Spanish Netherlands there had always been great jealousy and rivalry, and the troops of Alva were devoted to their commander. The bad feeling, ill-disguised at the first, soon manifested itself when the Spanish soldiers were quartered in the

city. On the occasion of the first interview between Alva and the Duchess, a quarrel broke out between the halberdiers and Margaret's body-guard of archers, who were with difficulty induced to allow them to pass.

The ten thousand troops were now quartered all over Brussels, and the strictest orders and regulations were issued by Alva, much fitter for a state of siege than for a free city. No secret was now made of the intentions of the new government; for Alva had virtually superseded the Regent, by claiming the power of sending garrisons to any town he chose; and he compelled the Duchess herself to issue a circular in which she announced the arrival of her dear cousin, and demanded

unconditional submission to his authority. When Alva opened his commission, it was found that he was invested with the title of Captain-General, and thus exercised supreme control in all military affairs; he was entirely independent of the Regent. When once the garrisons were reinforced by the Spanish troops, he announced his intention of re-establishing the Inquisition, with all its terrors; the re-enactment of the very worst laws of the very worst period against heresy; the determination of the King that henceforth the Netherlands were to be treated as a conquered country. So now all the liberties of a free people established by law, were by law to be destroyed; the country was henceforth to be ruled by one will, and that

a will so strong, so determined, so heartless—the will of Alva.

Only on one subject was the delusion kept up—he did not let it escape from him that all the leaders who had been implicated even in the least of the demonstrations against the Government, whatever their subsequent services, were to be arrested. His orders were, at the first opportunity to seize the persons of the Prince of Orange, Egmont, Horn, and Hoogstraten. Orange, as has been shown, had taken care to place himself beyond the reach of Alva's power; and even now there was hope for Egmont, if only he could be reasoned out of his blind infatuation.

And good counsels were not wanting

for him; his friends were more foreseeing than himself, and many warnings he had received, so that any one less sanguine would have had his fears aroused. It is true that on the part of the King and his General everything was done to perpetuate the delusion. The King addressed to him many letters, full of renewed expressions of love and confidence. Alva loaded him with caresses, and pretended to consult him on all weighty and important matters; so no warnings, no predictions, could make him open his eyes to the danger that menaced him. Seigneur de Billy, one of the Duke's gentlemen, said to him significantly one day, "that birds in the field sang more sweetly than those in cages." He saw the alarm which was

spreading through the whole country; that thousands and tens of thousands of the best workmen in those arts and manufactures which had been the boast of the Netherlands, were fleeing from the country; and yet at this moment he induced Count Horn to leave his retirement at Weert, where he was in safety, and to join him at Brussels.

One night a mysterious stranger was announced to Egmont, masked and cloaked. He told Egmont and his Countess that he came there risking his own life to save his—he implored him to start that night for the frontier, to trust no one, to believe in no false promises, for his doom was inevitable if he remained; and he did remain.

On the 9th of September the Council of State was summoned to meet at Culemberg House, and Egmont and Horn were present. After the council, there was to be a Grand banquet at the residence of the Grand Prior don Ferdinando de Toledo, to which the Seigniors were invited; and there was again a scene of feasting and revelry, in which Egmont delighted. It was observed that Egmont had never for some time been seen in higher spirits. But

> "Where mirth is full and free,
> Some sudden gloom shall be;
> When haughty power mounts high,
> The watcher's axe is nigh."

Alva sent a magnificent present of fruit and his own band to the fête, and a

message inviting the gentlemen to meet him after the dinner at his own house, to show them the drawings of a new line of fortifications it was proposed to erect at Antwerp.

It is said that, immediately after the banquet, when Egmont and others were proceeding to attend on Alva, according to his invitation, the Grand Prior whispered to Egmont "to saddle his fleetest horse and escape, without a moment's delay—in another hour it will be too late." Egmont was troubled, rose from his seat, and went into the adjoining room. Here he met one of the Duke's familiars, to whom he had the weakness to repeat the advice he had received. The officer ridiculed his visionary fears,

and the victim of credulity returned to the banqueting-hall.

At four o'clock Egmont and Horn left to join the Captain-General at the palace. They were welcomed with all that frankness and courtesy which Alva could so well assume, and the Duke congratulated them on the perfect harmony of feeling which now subsisted between all parties in Brussels, and the entire absence of bitterness. He prolonged the conversation until an officer put into his hands a note which announced the arrest of Bakkerzeel, Egmont's private secretary, and of the burgomaster of Antwerp. During a discussion between the noblemen and the eminent engineers, Urbino and Pacheco, Alva retired. The party then broke up. Egmont

was leaving the room, when he was accosted by Don Sancho D'Avila, Captain of the Duke's guard, and summoned to give up his sword. The demand was accompanied with every expression of regret and respect; but the summons was none the less peremptory, and had to be obeyed. Escape was impossible. The doors of the palace were closed. A detachment of musketeers entered the hall, and surrounded the Count. At any other time Egmont might have offered some resistance, and his name was still so beloved by even the Spanish army, it is possible the troops might have connived at his escape; but he was overcome by the suddenness of the arrest, and surrendered his sword at once. It was not thought safe to take him through

the streets, for the very stones would have risen in his defence. He was lodged therefore in an upper room in the palace, which had, by a cruel precaution, been prepared for his reception, for the walls were hung with black, and the windows were darkened. Horn, who was arrested at the same time in the courtyard, was taken to an adjoining room. In his dismal solitude, Egmont, the ever-credulous, might now mourn over the ingratitude of kings, the perfidy of ministers, and the evils which too frequently attend a truthful nature.

And now the time had arrived for the composition of that court of so-called justice from which the title of this sketch has been taken. A new tribunal was re-

quired by Alva, to be vested with extraordinary powers, not only to strike greater terror into the whole nation, but, by including in its composition certain important names, to weaken the confidence of the confederates in each other. In order that tyranny should be formally invested with its full powers, the greatest nobles were, immediately after the arrest of Egmont, summoned to the palace. These comprised some of the personal friends of the prisoners; such as Berlaymont, Noircarmes, the President Viglius, and Sr. Louis del Rio. To those Alva submitted the difficulty there was in the ordinary courts of performing the extraordinary duties which would now devolve upon them.

The Chief President Viglius, to whom all the rest deferred, stated his opinion that the Privy Council, the Grand Council, and the Provincial Councils, as well as all the ordinary judges, were too occupied to take part in these new proceedings; and he was of opinion that a new tribunal was necessary.

That same day the council was formed, to become ever memorable in history for its infamous notoriety. It was composed of the Comte de Berlaymont, Noircarmes, Le Sr. Jean Vargas, Le Sr. Louis del Rio, Sr. Adrien Nicolai, Sr. Jaques Martens, Sr. Pierre Asset, Sr. Jean de Blasère, Sr. Jean de la Porte, and Sr. Jaques de la Torre. Sr. Jean Dubois was named Procureur-Général. The court once constituted, the Duke de-

clared himself its President, and defined its limits. It was only to have the power of hearing each cause. The decision in every case was to rest with the President. He proposed that it should be called the Court or Council of His Excellency; but history has bestowed on it a higher name, more in accordance with the terrible and significant object of its constitution; it has been ever known as the "*Council of Blood.*"

Except the Committee of Public Safety in the French Revolution, such a terrible tribunal has never been known. All other courts, inferior or superior, were suppressed, or their decisions overruled, in eighteen articles drawn up by Alva himself. The new law of treason was defined. Anyone who had not actually opposed the field

preachings and the riotings; anyone who had signed the Request to the Regent; anyone who denied that the King had a right to deprive the people of all their privileges and liberties; anyone who said the present newly constituted tribunal had not power to abrogate and annul all previous laws, were to suffer death—a death the most cruel that could be invented. Under the operation of such a law not one could be safe for a moment; and so it was that within a few days of the formation of the council the work of slaughter had commenced in every city of the Netherlands.

For the creation of this tribunal of blood, the King was not responsible—it owed its existence solely to the will of

Alva. He had no authority from the King to constitute it; he had no power to make the appointments under which it was organized. The list of blood councillors was made out, and a place at the council accepted by all to whom it was offered—for who dared to refuse? Of all the council Del Rio and Vargas were alone allowed to vote, and Alva controlled all the decisions. The council first met on the 20th September, 1567, and all its members were bound by a solemn oath of secrecy as to its proceedings, and swore to denounce anyone who might divulge them. The penalty of doing so was death. By a new edict—

"It is forbidden to anyone to leave the land, or to sell off his effects, under

pain of being regarded as having taken part in the late troubles, and of being dealt with accordingly. All masters and owners of vessels who shall aid such persons in their flight shall incur the same penalties—death, and the confiscation of all property."

The work of destruction went on, and the trials—if, indeed, such a grotesque mockery of legal proceedings could be called trials—proceeded. Del Rio and Juan de Vargas proved themselves worthy ministers of Alva's persecutions. And the deputy commissioners they appointed did not betray the confidence placed in them by any merciful considerations. Many who were condemned by these officers of blood were not even summoned before the court. In

this they were unsurpassed by the proceedings in Paris during the later days of Terror; for the sanguinary leaders in these terrible times at least preserved some form of legal proceedings, the victims appearing at the bar and being permitted to plead.

Motley powerfully describes the state of the Netherlands after the organization of this terrible tribunal:—

"Thus the whole country became a charnel-house; the death-bell tolled in every village; not a family but was called upon to mourn for its dearest relatives, while the survivors stalked listlessly about, the ghosts of their former selves, among the wrecks of their former homes. The spirit of the nation, within a month of the arrival of Alva, was hopelessly broken. Submission

had ceased to be of any avail, flight was impossible, and the spirit of vengeance had alighted at every fireside. Columns and stakes in every street, the door-posts of private houses in the fields were laden with human carcases, strangled, burned, beheaded. The orchards in the country bore on every tree the hideous fruit of human bodies; and yet at this time Philip could write to Maximilian, who implored mercy for the suffering people.

"'What I have done has been for the repose of the provinces and the defence of the Catholic faith. If I had respected justice less, I should have dispatched the whole business in a single day. No person acquainted with the state of affairs will find reason to censure my severity,

nor would I do otherwise than I have done, though I should risk the sovereignty of the Netherlands. No, though the world should fall in ruins around me.'"

But, as if these horrors were not sufficient, an edict was published in February, 1568, which is without parallel in the history of tyranny. Alva had expressed to Philip his wish that every man, as he lay down at night, or rose in the morning, might feel that his house at any moment might fall and crush him. The edict was worthy of the atrocious wickedness of such a man. It sentenced the whole of the inhabitants of the Netherlands to death as heretics. The few exceptions were named. Three millions of people were condemned to the scaffold. This was a

fitting prelude to the great trial which was now to arouse the interest of all Europe; for people's minds are more easily excited by the single deed of violence than by universal wrong—by the one figure in a picture which impresses the mind more forcibly than the groups crowded into the canvas. The time had now arrived when, after nine months of the most cruel imprisonment, Egmont and Horn were to be brought to trial. Alva resolved to prove he was equally powerful to strike down the greatest as the lowest of the people.

But still there were difficulties in the way which Alva had not foreseen. Where law, mercy, justice, gratitude, humanity, pleaded in vain, feudal custom and knightly prestige were still powerful, and seemed

to oppose an almost insuperable obstacle to the fulfilment of Alva's vengeance. As knights of the Golden Fleece, that most renowned and most jealous order of chivalry, Egmont and Horn could only be tried by the brethren of the order, who were bound to be summoned by the King, as head of the order, with the approval of at least six of their fellow knights. Already Egmont, as a citizen of Brabant, had claimed the privilege of the *joyeuse entrée;* and Horn, as a Count of the Empire, demanded to be tried by the Electors. But they were alike met by the reply, "*Non curamos vostros privilegios.*" But it was far more difficult to over-rule the privileges of the Golden Fleece. These were considered sacred, and the

order itself the noblest in Christendom. It was instituted by Philip the Good, to the glory of God, of the blessed Virgin, and of the Holy Andrew, patron saint of the Burgundians. It had, from the first moment, and up to this date, enrolled among the companions of the order the noblest names in Europe. By its statutes the knights formed a brotherhood which were bound to mutual love and support, and Christian amity. To strike a blow at the order was to strike down all that chivalry, which, next to the Inquisition, Philip prided himself on supporting. But the royal hatred and vengeance rendered useless even the representations of all the knights of the order, when they entreated him to respect their privileges; and he de-

clared that those he termed his enemies should die, though the sky should fall on his head. The only reply vouchsafed by Alva was, "The privileges and statutes of the order can in no way affect the jurisdiction and competence of His Majesty as Lord of the Netherlands; and the cognisance of such crimes and offences can never belong to the knights of the order, or to any other person or persons whatsoever."

Yet it was not possible for one so reckless and unscrupulous in his proceedings entirely to defy all justice and law, and the solemn appeals addressed to Brussels, without the whole sympathy of Europe being called forth. The Emperor, the Sovereign Princes of Bavaria and Lorraine, and others, even the hated and heart-

less Duchess Margaret, interposed, and Philip was urged to pause before taking so grave a step. All was in vain, and when Alva was pressed to declare on what authority he denied the privileges of the Golden Fleece, he produced a patent antedated eight months, by which he was authorised to proceed against the knights of the Golden Fleece, all laws and privileges notwithstanding.

Two months after their arrest the proceedings commenced; not in public, for, crushed as the spirit of the people was, the appearance of the two great popular nobles would have aroused the weakest of the multitude, and turned the coward's heart to flame. In the middle of November —a sad, gloomy time for such gloomy and

sad proceedings—councillors were named to examine the prisoners; and day after day they were dragged before them, unaided by any advocate, and not permitted to refer to any documents. These proceedings were prolonged for some weeks, and the unhappy sufferers were left to their solitude in Ghent, to which city their prison had been transferred. In that beautiful city, the scene of so many of his early triumphs, Egmont felt the bitter contrast between the glory of his youth and his now abject fortunes.

> "Nessun maggior dolore
> Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
> Nella miseria."

And all around, in the heart of the city and in the solitude of the plain, was

in harmony with his misery. A stillness as of death, a stillness that might be felt—that desert which tyranny creates, and then calls it peace, had possession of the fair and once flourishing town. The business of life was entirely arrested; the cold hand of persecution had frozen the pulse of energy; all around was mournful, gloomy, and dark. In that city, possessing the noblest monuments and memorials of the liberties of the people, all liberty was crushed. Heavenward rose the watch-tower which recalled the days when the bells pealed their welcome in honour of Egmont, and he rode through the streets in triumph, the very mould and expression of chivalry. The same chimes now recalled his attention to the passing hours—only then

they seemed to ring in sympathy with all his hopes, now they idly mocked them. Moreover, he was separated from a wife to whom he was devoted. She had, with her eleven young children, taken shelter in a convent; for in those dark evil days, even such a wife and such a mother might have been sacrificed with her family. Persecution knew neither age nor sex.

The fate of the illustrious prisoners was hastened by the stirring events in which the Prince of Orange took part, undaunted by the fact that his son was in the King's power, who kept him as a hostage for his father's conduct. He determined, as soon as the act of condemnation was passed against him, at once to rouse the country to arms, and pub-

lished his famous declaration and defence. In this he denied the jurisdiction of the Council of Blood; he upbraided Philip with his vile and wild excesses of tyranny; and after mentioning the services rendered to his country through a long line of ancestors, he renounced for ever his allegiance to a sovereign who had violated the most solemn oaths and every principle of honour and feeling.

To his patriotic appeal the country replied with a cry of delight and enthusiasm; and money was immediately subscribed by all the great cities. Not a hamlet, nor scarcely a cottage in a hamlet, but sent in its gift for the purchase of its priceless freedom. Nearly all the great nobles, including many of those who up to this time

had in some measure supported Alva's proceedings, gave in their adherence to the popular cause. Those emigrants who had been so fortunate as to carry away any portion of their wealth, sent over large sums for this supreme effort. The Prince of Orange himself staked all he possessed on the great venture. Every piece of plate on which money could be raised was parted with. The citizens were enrolled in each province. Alva was, in the first instance, taken by surprise; but, to do him justice, he showed himself equal to the greatness of the emergency. He divided his forces with consummate skill. One division was commanded by Don Sancho de Lodrono and Don Sancho D'Avila, and

was opposed to Seigneur de Villars, who was signally defeated in the neighbourhood of Dalem. Another division was commanded by Count d'Aremberg; and a third by Count Meghem, Statholder of Gueldres. These were intended to operate against Count Louis of Nassau, whose forces were concentrated at Appingadam.

Alva now indulged in the confident hope that this united force of five thousand of the flower of the Spanish troops would at once give a death-blow to the confederacy. He had little opinion of Count Louis as a general, or of the Netherlanders as troops. On the 23rd of May, Aremberg, without waiting the arrival of Meghem, who was still some leagues dis-

tant, moved rapidly against Count Louis, who was retreating from Appingadam on the monastery of Heiligerlee, or the Holy Lion. Here Aremberg for the first time learnt what even an undrilled force can accomplish by the greatness of a cause.

The monastery of Heiligerlee, with the beautiful woods which surround it, will long be a favourite resort for the descendants of those who fought on that memorable 23rd of May. Here the first blow struck by free hands against the renowned Spanish infantry. Defeat, disappointment, broken hopes, and sad, dark days were still to be undergone; but this gleam of victory pierced through the gloom of deepest sorrows. That which had once been achieved might be achieved

again; those who had conquered even in their disarray might well hope to do so when they had learned experience. No ground could have been better selected than that chosen by Count Louis. The eminence where his troops were posted was surrounded by swamps and broken ground, over which, by narrow causeways, Aremberg's force had to pass. The high Spanish blood could brook no delay; the Gueux must be exterminated, even before the arrival of Meghem. The Spaniards dashed across this marshy, dangerous ground, and endeavoured to reach the main body of the insurgents; but Count Louis had posted his light infantry on each flank, and poured in so deadly a fire on the advancing columns, that they

first hesitated, and then turned. There are times when the confidence inspired by constant victory and repeated successes is converted into greater panic by any sudden blow of adverse fortune. It was so in the present instance; for the discomfiture was soon turned into a speedy retreat, and then into a complete rout. Aremberg vainly strove to retrieve the day. He rushed into the thickest of the fight, and shot with his own hand Adolphus of Nassau, brother of Count Louis—an irreparable loss; but his death was speedily avenged by a friendly arm, who struck Aremberg down as, desperately wounded, he was retiring from the field his rashness had lost.

But this victory of Heiligerlee was the

signal for the fulfilment of the destiny of Egmont and Horn. Alva resolved to wreak a terrible vengeance for the loss of the flower of his army. If Aremberg could not be restored to life, at least his foes should join him in the other world. Now it was that the Council of Blood set heartily to work, for nothing was wanting to complete the spectacle of horror but the death of Egmont and of Horn; and the horse-market of Brussels soon flowed with the blood of those noble prisoners, who had been long reserved for such an emergency.

So far as regarded the examination—and if such a mockery of justice can be called a trial—all the proceedings against the prisoners had been closed on 14th of May,

but the decision and sentence of the court had not been promulgated.* Orders were given to conduct the prisoners, on the 3rd June, from Ghent to Brussels, under an escort of three thousand picked men. The melancholy cortége passed through the streets amid the gloom and sorrow depicted on the countenances of the thousands that crowded round them. They were led to the Maison du Roi, situated in the great market-place of the city. There squadrons and battalions were drawn up to receive

* Alva on that day published a declaration:—"Que ledit Conte Egmont est pour la dernière fois débouté et exclus de toute sorte de defence et preuve par devant sa dite excellence, et la dite cause pour concluse afin que icelle soit par sentence définitive décidée et déterminée, comme se trouvera appartenir. Faite a Bruxelles, le 14th Mai, 1568.

"(Signé), F. A., Duc d'Albe."

them, and to impose on the agitated people.

Delay might even now have been fatal to the fulfilment of Alva's terrible object; for the Emperor Maximilian had at last interfered. He had sent one in his confidence to the Countess Egmont, to assure her that her husband had nothing to fear —that the prisoner's life was under the Imperial protection. Therefore, on the next day, the 4th of June, Alva assembled the council, which he attended in person. He ordered the Secretary to produce the two sentences, which were sealed. The seal was broken—the sentence was death. Nor was the signature of the King wanting, for the death-warrants were brought from Madrid with Alva, drawn up in due form with

the royal sign-manual, with blank spaces for the names.

Already the Duke of Alva had sent an order for the Bishop of Ypres to attend him at Brussels. He arrived on the 4th of June, little thinking for what a sad duty he was summoned. He at once waited on the Duke, who informed him that he was appointed to break the intelligence of the sentence that had been passed to the two Counts, and to attend them in their last devotions.

The Bishop, struck with horror at the suddenness of the intelligence, and the awful condemnation, implored the Duke for mercy. He dared to urge the great services which in former days Egmont had rendered to the State. He little knew

that these very services were the original cause of the intense hatred Alva bore to his victim. The Churchman, with all his knowledge of the human heart, had not fathomed the depths of the infamy of Alva. When he urged that the death of one so loved as Egmont would only serve to arouse a deeper spirit of vengeance through the country, he was appealing to a man whose fearlessness of character was his one virtue. He knelt, and bursting into tears, implored Alva at least to delay the fatal sentence. Inexorable as fate and destiny, the Duke listened, scarcely with patience. He briefly told him that he had not invited him to discuss the sentence, but to prepare the prisoners for its execution.

His transfer from Ghent to Brussels Egmont had felt was ominous of some dire event, and his fears were confirmed by the rumours that had reached his prison before the arrival of the Bishop. It was midnight when the Bishop, finding that all further supplication was useless, reached the cell where Egmont pined alone. Roused from his slumbers, he listened to the fatal sentence. At first he was struck down at the suddenness of the blow, and then burst out into an expression of mingled sorrow and indignation. At any pause of the exhortations of the Bishop, the noise of the workmen might be heard, through the stillness of the night, erecting the scaffold on which he, the beloved of all, was to perish in á few short hours. The lights

which gleamed from the torches through the windows of the cell, the tramp of the troops, as, even at that early hour, they were taking up their posts, confirmed the Bishop's assurance that all hope was in this world at an end. Again and again the tempest of grief and anger swept over Egmont; but at last there dawned on his anguished soul sacred, gentle, and loving thoughts, which flowed forth in prayers for his patient wife, and for the children of that home he had ever loved so well. He indulged the hope that he might obtain for them that mercy which was denied to himself; and before he could turn his thoughts to God he penned that letter to the King which has become celebrated.

"Sire, I have learned this morning the sentence which your Majesty has passed upon me; and although I never had a thought hostile to the service and the person of your Majesty, and the ancient Catholic faith, still I will patiently endure whatever God may please to send me; and during all these troubles I have ever acted for the service of God and of your Majesty. If it should seem otherwise to your Majesty, I pray your forgiveness, and, for the sake of my past services, to take pity on my poor wife, my children, and servants; and in this hope I recommend myself to the mercy of God. Written at Brussels, ready to die, on this 5th of June, 1568. Your Majesty's very humble servant and vassal,

"LAMORAL D'EGMONT."

Of this letter Egmont made a copy, which he intended to send to the President Viglius. The Bishop then proposed to administer the last sacraments, but Egmont delayed this supreme act, as if from that moment he felt that all hope would be at an end. It was not until Don Juan de Romero, the maître de camp, solemnly assured him there was no hope, that he prepared to resign his soul to God, and the Bishop administered extreme unction. Immediately after the officer in command of the guard entered the room and announced that the fatal hour had arrived. He said that his orders were to tie his hands; but this indignity Egmont refused to submit to, and with his own hands cut off the collar of his doublet, so

as not to interfere with the blow of the axe. By this time his energy of character had returned. Now that all hope was gone, he rose to the awful greatness of the occasion.

> "He nothing vulgar did or mean,
> But stood an actor worthy of the scene."

When he stepped forth to walk across the great square to the scaffold, his countenance seemed to rekindle with the memories of early days, of his great victories, of his youthful triumphs; and he appeared less the victim led to the scaffold than the conqueror of the armies of France in the hour of glory. The bands of guards that surrounded the scaffold formed a lane for the procession to pass; and the gazers, as they crowded every housetop, could see his white and black plume as it

waved in the morning breeze. The Grand Provost was on horseback at the foot of the scaffold, with a red wand in his hand; and in front, at the corners, were two poles, with spikes for the heads of Alva's victims. When he stood on the scaffold, and that goodly countenance was seen for the last time, a deep wail of indignation and sorrow burst forth; and so universal seemed the movement, that the three thousand Spanish infantry closed their ranks, to prevent any attempt at a rescue. But the movement was unnecessary—the very intensity of the anguish led to despair. The Netherlanders had suffered much—they lay down at night and found no rest—they rose in the morning, but not to hope; but no persecution,

no sorrow, no misery, could realize to their mind a scene so absorbing as this spectacle of woe.

Egmont endeavoured to address a few words to the crowd, but his voice failed him; and the Bishop counselled him to let his thoughts dwell with God alone. He then gazed for a few moments on that beautiful square, on the quaint picturesque houses, and rich, mullioned windows, which, on other occasions, as on the present, had been filled with wondering observers—then to partake of and sympathize in his brilliant triumph, now to feel their hearts stricken with the same blow that was to deaden his own for ever. As he received from the Bishop the last absolution, 'not a sound was heard from the dense and awe-

struck masses. After the absolution, Egmont removed his rich velvet mantle, and the insignia of that order of chivalry—the Golden Fleece—whose privileges were now to be so flagrantly outraged. He then knelt on a black velvet cushion, the Grand Provost waved his red wand, and the fatal blow was struck.

Then arose from earth to sky one wild cry of despair. The great force was unable any longer to resist the pressure of the populace. The people rushed forward to the scaffold, and knelt in prayer before it; they swore deep and terrible oaths never to rest until this noble life was avenged. Some dipped their handkerchiefs in the blood as it dripped from the scaffold. Even the Spanish soldiers were moved to

sorrow as they remembered Saint Quentin. Dark and evil days were still in store for the devoted provinces; but never in all their sad history was there a darker, sadder day than the 5th of June, 1568.

The Flight of Varennes.

MORE than three-fourths of a century have elapsed since the memorable and terrible events of the French Revolution, when the foundations of the greatest and oldest of the European monarchies were uprooted—when every tradition, and every association of the past was rudely assailed, and no circumstance was wanting which could add to the terrors of the present or the gloom of the future. The lapse of time has in no degree diminished the interest which the history of that period ever commands. Publication after pub-

lication which refers to these events is eagerly sought after, for the tale of the French Revolution appeals to all our feelings and sympathies. The lightning struck not only the palace and the Church, but the humblest home. Nothing was too high or too low for the devastating blast. The revolution, when it burst forth, baffled all calculations, for nothing in past ages had ever been so terrible and so sudden. All experience was at fault. As Sir Henry Bulwer admirably and truly remarks, "The history of this mighty revolution is still stirring amongst us—the breath of the tempest, which struck down tower and steeple, is still frequently fancied to be rustling about our own dwellings."

When the eminent and venerable Profes-

sor of history in Cambridge University addressed his lectures on the French Revolution to an anxious and attentive audience, he dwelt with an impressive earnestness, which those who listened to that old "man eloquent" will never forget, on the mental sufferings, the terrible anxieties, of the unhappy Royal Family, when each day saw the number of their friends diminishing, and the circle of their liberty becoming more and more restricted—when the palace which witnessed all their early joys, all the happiness of their youth, became their prison. But of all the scenes depicted by the historian, none called forth deeper emotions, or was painted in more vivid colours, than the flight of Varennes. Then, invariably, he was overpowered by his feelings,

and he sobbed aloud. And, indeed, the most careless reader or superficial thinker cannot fail to peruse with breathless interest the story of the succession of unfortunate and unforeseen circumstances, the fatal blunders, the errors of calculation, the combination of accidents, which resulted in the failure of this attempt of Louis XVI. to escape to the frontier, and in his return to the Tuileries, never to leave its walls again until the fatal 10th of August.

We must seek in Greek tragedy, in the genius of Sophocles, for a suitable expression for the fatal destiny which seems on this occasion to have fallen upon this unhappy family. Doubt, trouble, and terror were their never-failing companions. Like

Œdipus in the Tyrannus, every action of the King seemed destined to accelerate, instead of averting, his impending doom. His projects were not always wise; but even when they were most so, some cruel fate seemed to baffle them. So we see in Holbein's "Dance of Death" a ghastly spectre ever present in dim and shadowy outline in the various scenes of life. In all existence individual and national, nothing is more remarkable than the influence of seemingly the most trifling causes on the destinies of men and nations. It is a solemn thought that the consequences of no action ever dies—that in the long chain of human events the most trifling link is important; but seldom has this been more unmistak-

ably evinced than in the preparations for the flight to Varennnes, and in the flight itself; and never were the consequences of failure more striking and more terrible. To this ill-fortune of the King the Queen was keenly sensitive, and she had no confidence in her own destiny, even before her marriage. On All Soul's Day she used to say, "Le jour des morts, c'est ma fête ce jour-là." But her superstitious dread of the unknown was increased when she became acquainted with the character of the King. Of this voyage she said from the first, "Ce voyage ne reussira pas, le Roi est trop malheureux." It was, certainly, a responsible step to take; for if unsuccessful, the consequences could not fail to be most disastrous. Up to that date there

was still a hope, if not for monarchy in all its pomp and splendour, at least for a monarchy shorn of many of its privileges; and, at any rate, there was a hope for humanity.

After the flight of Varennes, the torrent of human passion rolled on with irresistible violence. Every bad feeling which can agitate human nature was aroused. Had the King reached the camp of Montmédy, how much misery and disgrace the nation would have been spared! The leaders, reeking with their Bacchanalian orgies of blood, might never have crawled forth from their hiding-places. Anarchy would not have stalked over the land, to be succeeded by a military despotism, which turned the plains of Europe into

one common burial-ground, and which, if it added to the military glory of France, did so, finally, at the price of her liberties.

The first thing that strikes the reader of this most sorrowful historical episode is the overweening confidence the King always had in his own judgment.

Had the King intrusted himself and his family entirely to others, it is more than probable the plan would have been successful. Another great misfortune was that he was unable to conceal any emotion, *il portait son cœur en écharpe.* But for this weakness he never would have made such a violent enemy of the Duke of Orléans, he would much sooner have conciliated Mirabeau, and at one time Lafayette might have been gained to the Royal cause, but he was

wanting in that fine tact which retains the confidence of friends and conciliates opponents.

The outrages of the 18th of February 1791, the insurrection of the 18th of April, when the Royal Family were prevented leaving the Tuileries for Saint Cloud, the sacrifice of the King's conscientious scruples by his sanction given to the civil constitution of the clergy, and the consecration of the Constitutional Church of Saint Germain L'Auxerrois—a concession which was extorted from him, by the menace of an attack to be made on the Tuileries by the whole of the sections—decided the King to withdraw from the capital. Different projects of flight were suggested. The first was that of retiring to Brussels by the

road of Compiègne. The Queen's idea was only to retire to Luxembourg, to assemble there the principal members of the Parliament of the whole of France, to surround the king with all the most loyal of the troops, and there to hold a *lit de justice.* The King was determined on one point, that he would not leave the kingdom. From that moment the schemes for retreating into Belgium or England were at an end. He wished to find a place of security on the frontier, where, surrounded by faithful troops, he could appear as the arbiter of all parties, free from any foreign influences. Starting from this point, the choice became very limited.

Most of the general officers then employed were opposed to the Crown. M.

de Rochambeau, who commanded in Flanders, had no sympathy with the Royal cause. The one General the King could depend on was M. de Bouillé; he was, of all the Generals with Royalist opinions, the only one who remained at his post. He commanded in the departments of La Meurthe, La Moselle, and Marne, and in his division were comprised nearly all the troops that could be depended on. It was finally resolved to take refuge with him It certainly was unfortunate that M. de Bouillé was stationed at such a distance from Paris; but it must be remembered that the King had decided not to cross the frontier. The question as to the destination of the King and Royal Family having been determined, the next thing was to fix by

what route this was to be reached; and here, at starting, the King's evil genius was apparent. He was most strongly advised by M. de Bouillé to take the frequented road to Montmédy, that of Rheims; and, secondly, to trust himself to the simplest and least remarkable conveyance. On both these points the King differed with his advisers. The reasons that induced M. de Bouillé to recommend the road through Rheims were, that the road to Varennes had no regular relays of post-horses; and that the presence of troops on this road would, however specious the pretence, excite attention. The Marquis de Bouillé represented as forcibly as possible that, if strong detachments of troops were sent to the different towns and villages, they would

excite suspicion; and if those detachments were weak, they would fail in their object. But the unfortunate monarch had a dislike to pass through the city where he had been crowned, and was strong in the conviction that he would be more secure on the less frequented road by Chalons.

On a minor point the King again differed with the Marquis de Bouillé. This was as to the description of conveyance required for the journey. From a natural sentiment, he disliked to be separated from the Queen, and consequently he declined to travel in two light carriages, which would have attracted no attention, and by employing which many hours would have been saved where every minute was valuable.

So he gave orders for the construction of a berline, large enough to contain himself, the Queen, Mademoiselle, the Dauphin, Madame Elizabeth, and Madame de Tourzel, the governess of the royal children. It was built to carry luggage on the roof and at the back. There was also a large banquette in front, to accommodate three persons on the outside. A cumbrous, overladen, top-heavy vehicle, it required six horses to draw it. The King imagined it would not excite observation, when at any time it must have been remarked, if not ridiculed, by all who saw it.

The carriage was built entirely in accordance with the King's desire. The Count de Fersen,* in order to try its strength,

*M. de Fersen was murdered at Stockholm, in

had six horses put to it, and drove on the road to Vincennes, where he suddenly met the Duke of Orléans, who had been dining with Madame de Buffon.

"Etes vous fou, mon cher coute!" exclaimed the Duke, "vous jouez la un jeu pour vous casser le cou?"

"C'est que je ne veux pas que ma voiture casse en route."

"Pourquoi donc est-elle si large, nous enleverait-elle tout le chœur de l'opera?"

"Non, monseigneur, je vous le laisse."

And they separated.

Subsequently the Prince might have

1810, at the funeral of the Prince Royal Charles Augustus, under the pretence that he had been accessory to the death of the Prince. He was dragged from the guard-house, and beaten to death with umbrellas.

given a description of the carriage, but it does not appear that he did so. Count Fersen returned to Paris, having well tested its strength. As if it were not heavy enough, it was furnished with duplicate springs and sufficient iron to reconstruct it on the road. Everything was thought of except that one essential qualification without which all others were of no avail—speed.

It may appear surprising that on certain points M. de Bouillé, in such a great crisis, did not overrule the fancies of the King; but he dreaded that, in His Majesty's frame of mind, any contradiction would induce him to give up the plan of escape; and, educated as the Marshal had been in the old monarchical ideas, he did

not like to question the superior authority of his sovereign. Assuredly, with the force which M. de Bouillé had under his orders —one hundred battalions of infantry and one hundred and four squadrons of cavalry, one third of which entire force might be depended on—it was for him to have pointed out, and, if necessary, to have insisted on the best means of carrying into effect the ultimate wishes of the King. One thing is certain, that whatever course M. de Bouillé adopted, was dictated by the highest motives; for he was above suspicion at this evil time, when suspicion was cast on all. Distinguished by the self-sacrificing grandeur of his qualities and the nobility of his nature, when all around him were emigrating and fleeing from the

dangers created by their own selfishness and misgovernment,

> "Quanto quis illustrior,
> Tanto magis falsi ac festinantes."

He remained, Palinurus-like, at his post, and if he was unable to imbue the whole army under his command with his loyal sentiments, at least he won the respect of all by the devotion and attachment to the King, which he never attempted to conceal. That all his efforts to save the Royal Family were of no avail was the lasting sorrow of the Marshal; and the night of Varennes was never effaced from his heart.

The Comte de Fersen was another most devoted adherent of the Royal Family, and the very main-spring of this expedi-

tion. He is made the hero of Le Chevalier de la Maison Rouge, one of the most popular of modern historical romances. A Swedish gentleman, he had long felt for the Queen that devotion which beauty, misfortune, and womanly gentleness cannot fail to call forth in the young and ardent, even when the object does not possess so many additional claims on the feelings. It is only a marvel that such unselfish attachment for one so worthy did not beat in the pulses of the whole youth of France. It might have been expected that even at the first insult offered to that fair head

> "A thousand warriors forth had leaped,
> A thousand swords had sheathless shone,
> And made her quarrel all their own."

Alas! it was not so; and we feel that all was lost, not more by the audacity of the mob than by the indifference of the nobility.

Between the 18th of April and the 18th of June all the preparations were made for the flight. At the same time many of the wisest precautions were counteracted, or only partially carried out, by the obstinacy of the King. The King was advised by the Marshal to engage the Emperor of Austria to make a demonstration on the frontier, in the vicinity of Montmédy, in order to explain and justify the concentration of so large a force in that neighbourhood; but this suggestion was not agreeable to His Majesty. The Court of Vienna, considering the ties which connected the two families,

had evinced little disposition to succour the Royal Family. Indeed, the Emperor had informed the King that he could take no steps to assist him until he was out of Paris—that was until the King had no pressing occasion for his assistance. Undoubtedly, as M. de Bouillé remarks, the extraordinary weakness and obstinacy of Louis rendered the Emperor unwilling to compromise himself until the Royal Family were freed from all restraint, and the actions of the King were no longer controlled by inferior advisers.

Subject to all these difficulties, the arrangements for the flight advanced. Most unfortunate was it that M. de Portail, who was entirely devoted to the Assembly, had replaced M. de Latour-du-Pin at the War

department. And M. de Bouillé found it very difficult to counteract the evil of the constant change of the military stations. The Duc de Choiseul lamented that at the most important moment his own regiment, whose loyalty could be entirely depended on, was ordered to Neufbrisach; and it was only at the most earnest instance of M. de Bouillé that one hundred dragoons were permitted to be left at head-quarters, under the plea of sickness.

The road by Châlons being decided on, M. de Bouillé, contrary to his own opinion, but in fulfilment of the wishes of the King, determined to station troops on the road from Châlons to Montmédy, under the pretence that they were intended to escort a treasure, a plea the most unfortunate, be-

cause among the calumnies spread against the Queen was the charge of sending money from France to the Emperor, her brother. Besides, the very name of a treasure was suspicious, and aroused attention.

Early in June, pleading the necessity of protecting the Meuse on the side of Stenay, M. de Bouillé began concentrating his forces about Dun, so that he could the more easily transfer them to the various places which it was intended to occupy.

M. de Goguelat was employed to reconnoitre the whole country between Châlons and Montmédy, and to draw up an accurate report of the state of feeling of the people, and the nature of the surrounding country, in case the Royal Family were compelled

to leave the main road. As the time drew near the arrangements became more precise. M. de Choiseul was summoned on the 8th of June to Metz, where M. de Bouillé informed him that every disposition was made for a camp of ten thousand men, whose loyalty might be depended on, and who were ready to march at a moment's notice.

Shortly before the 18th of June, a hundred hussars were stationed at Varennes (that ill-omened name)—they were commanded by the Count de Bouillé.* The regiment of Monsieur, commanded by Count Charles de Damas, was under orders to march to Clermont on the 19th, and there remain. The detachment of one hundred dragoons of Le

* Count de Bouillé was the son of the Marquis.

Regiment Royal had been detained by M. de Bouillé—they were commanded by the Duc de Choiseul, and were to arrive at Clermont on the 20th. They were there to be divided—forty dragoons were sent to St. Menehould, and sixty to the village of Augeville, three quarters of a league from Clermont. M. de Goguelat had the most important charge of all. He was stationed at the Pont de Sommevesle with forty men. His orders were to send a trooper as soon as the first of the royal couriers had arrived, to inform the young Count de Bouillé. So distinct was M. de Bouillé on this point, that he had foreseen the possibility of M. de Goguelat's being compelled to change his position, and leave Sommevesle; in which

case he was ordered to keep near that place, to disguise himself, if necessary, and only to retire at the last extremity; and always, if compelled to do so, to fall back on M. de Bouillé, passing without fail through Varennes. Relays of horses were to be ready at each post. It was on the strict fulfilment of these instructions that M. de Bouillé considered the success of the whole plan depended. If everything turned out favourably, then the commanding officer at each station after Châlons was at once to place himself in communication with the King. If the King preferred to be recognised, the troops were to form an escort, which would have been strengthened at each succeeding relay; but above all they were to leave a strong detach-

ment in the rear, and to block the road to Paris, so as to prevent the possibility of any pursuit.

From the first, however, one thing was certain, that the success of all these arrangements depended on exactitude and punctuality. A great minister once said that "the greatest quality of a public man is to gain time." And Mazarin exclaimed, "Le temps et moi contre le monde." But time and punctuality were never of greater importance than on the present occasion. It was evident that troops could not remain stationed in unusual places without exciting suspicion; and suspicion at this moment was held to be confirmation strong, to be followed by immediate action.

The day of departure was finally fixed. A courier was appointed to await the arrival of the royal party at Bondy. If the King did not arrive within so many hours of the time fixed, another courier was to start for Montmédy, to announce the failure of the scheme, and thus afford time for the Marquis and his friends to provide for their safety.

At last the King, having in the first instance named the 12th as the day of departure, and then changed it to the 17th, determined on the 19th—if that can be called a determination which only expressed the hope that he would be able to start on that day. And the King's final resolution was only made known to M. de Bouillé after much time had been lost.

The Comte de Fersen having omitted to indicate the page of the cypher which was to be found in the volume—"De la Grandeur et de la Décadence des Romains."

The 19th was however the day finally fixed on, and every arrangement was made. The several detachments of troops were ordered to march to their destinations, when suddenly the King announced to the Duc de Choiseul that one of the ladies who was in attendance on the Dauphin that night had fallen ill. The person who took her place, and who would be on duty on the night of the 19th, was not to be trusted. There was, therefore, no resource but to put off the departure for twenty-four hours.

The Duc de Choiseul pointed out

the danger of this change, and suggested that Madame Brunier should take the place of the suspected lady. But the mind of the King once fixed on the 20th, nothing could induce him to alter his resolution. The Duke was then compelled to inform His Majesty of the final determination of M. de Bouillé, of which he had been informed before he left on his important mission. This was on no account to allow of postponement beyond the 20th. If absolutely essential, the King might delay until that day, but if he had not left Paris by the night of the 20th, then the Duc de Choiseul was to start at four o'clock on the morning of the 21st, and to withdraw all the troops as he passed along the road on his way to head-quarters.

It was another most unfortunate circumstance that the Queen was induced to yield to the persistence of Madame de Tourzel, governess of the royal children, who refused to waive her right of accompanying the royal party. This necessitated leaving behind the Marquis d'Argoult, who had been appointed by M. de Bouillé as the one person capable of taking charge of such an important enterprise. Never did vanity of place or Court dignity lead to such evil results. M. d'Argoult's presence of mind and firmness of character was equal to any emergency. If every venture requires some one to direct it, surely this was the one in which some competent controlling authority was absolutely essential. Had

Madame de Tourzel yielded her place in the carriage to M. d'Argoult, it is more than probable that all the difficulties which arose would have been overcome; his decision of character would have supplied the lamentable deficiences of the King, and on the great emergency at the last his influence and authority would have overruled the hesitating populace.

The eventful morning of the 20th of June dawned—that day which was to decide the fate of monarchy in France. The nervous indecision of the unhappy King became more and more apparent as the hours sped on. At the moment when every energy should have been roused, his faculties seemed to be entirely benumbed. It is true that at this time no one was more isolated than

the King. Nearly all those whom he could regard as friends, or whose hearts had been touched by his misfortunes—all those who clung to Royalty as a faith—some of whom quartered in their arms the lilies of France, had been driven into exile, or had voluntarily emigrated; and not a few had deserted that service which formerly they had rendered with so much fidelity. Through those magnificent galleries, associated with the glories and grandeur of a long line of kings, the monarch, prematurely aged, the man of sorrows, wandered desolate. He must have contrasted the present loneliness with the scenes of festivity and joy which those halls had witnessed; and none more remarkable than on the festal morn, when the young and beautiful Austrian Arch-

Duchess—the future Queen of France—presented herself at the window of the palace, and was gladdened by the outburst of affection and love which burst from the delighted crowd who on that day thronged the gardens to bid welcome to the lovely stranger. Changed, indeed! Now as then the gardens contained an agitated crowd; but it was the agitation not of love, but of hatred, and the enthusiasm of admiration was converted into frantic denunciations against the Autrichienne and the King.

That day the King drew up a manifesto in which he justified his departure, and very clearly exposed the evils which he found it quite impossible any longer to combat. In the first paragraph he says: "That while the King hoped to see

the order and happiness of the kingdom restored by the measures of the National Assembly, and by his residence near that assembly, in the capital, he regretted no personal sacrifice; nor should he have objected to the nullity with which an absolute privation of freedom has affected all his proceedings since the month of October, 1789, if that hope had been fulfilled. But now that his only recompense for so many sacrifices is to behold the destruction of royalty—to see all the powers of government dissolved, all property violated, personal safety everywhere endangered, crimes remaining unpunished, and anarchy domineering over the laws, while that semblance of authority given him by the new constitution is insufficient for re-

pairing any one of these evils with which the kingdom is afflicted, the King, after solemnly protesting against all the acts which emanated from him during his captivity, believes that he ought to submit to the view of France, and of the whole of Europe, a detail of his own conduct, and of that of the government that has established itself within the kingdom."

Nothing more true; but it is to be regretted that, before he was in safety, the King thought it wise to repudiate all his past acts, and to plead that his concessions had been extorted from him by force. It was the error made by Charles I., and the effect simply was to destroy all confidence in any assurance or promise he might give when the safety of those who had offended him

depended on his word. Once in safety, the natural force of events, that reaction which was certain to set in, would have relieved him from the effects of that violence against which he so strongly protested.

Although no secret could have been more admirably kept, and nothing had occurred to arouse the suspicions of the spies who surrounded the palace and frequented the gardens of the Tuileries, an uneasy movement was perceptible amongst those charged with the guard of the Palace. A vague, mysterious apprehension seemed to possess everyone; in consequence of which it became still more difficult for the Queen to make her final arrangements. M. de Gouvion, aide-de-camp to M. de

Lafayette, doubled all the posts. Every corridor and door through which it was probable anyone might pass was carefully guarded, and all the officers on duty at the Palace were commanded to be on the alert.

These vague rumours, these uncertain fears, were not confined to the superior authorities; throughout Paris there was an instinctive apprehension that the Royal Family intended to escape from that Palace which had become their prison. Camille Desmoulins was so impressed with this conviction, that, with one of his friends, Fréron, he went to the house of M. de Lafayette to communicate his apprehensions; but these were treated by M. de Lafayette as idle imaginations.

It must be said that the conduct of M. de Lafayette at this time was open to that suspicion with which it was regarded by the popular leaders. It is difficult to believe that he was not in some measure aware of the projects of the Court; and it was not unfairly surmised that the unusual precautions taken at the Palace on the night of the twentieth were merely intended for the purpose of averting suspicion from himself, in the event of failure. No man was fonder of popular applause, the *plebis suffragia*, than Lafayette; but at the same time he was not without feeling and affection for the King. When young De Bouillé was sent to Paris by the General to make the last arrangements for the flight, he called at the

head-quarters of Lafayette. The General then expressed to the young officer his opinion of the King. "Le Roi sert la Constitution; d'ailleurs c'est un homme qui n'a nul caractère, et dont je ferai ce que je voudrais sans la Reine, qui me gêne beaucoup; elle me temoigne souvent de la confiance, mais elle ne se livre pas assez à mes avis, qui assureraient sa popularité; elle a ce qu'il faut pour s'attacher le cœur des Parisiens, mais une ancienne morgue, et une humeur quelle ne sait pas assez cacher les lui éloignent le plus souvent." This judgment of the Royal characters, which certainly appears very fair, sufficiently explains the want of confidence of Lafayette. It is remarkable how this mistrust in the character and word of the Sove-

reign existed in our own Revolution. Charles and Louis were alike prepared on every occasion to urge the plea that a promise extorted by force is never sacred.

On another occasion M. de Lafayette said to the Count de Bouillé:—

"Qu'il n'avait aucune ambition que celle du bien public, et de l'achèvement d'une heureuse et libre constitution; qu'il ne demandait d'autre récompense de ses services que le suffrage et l'estime de ces concitoyens; qu' une fois sa tache remplie, il reprendrait son rang militaire, et se retirerait à la campagne. En jouissant de l'approbation et de l'affection publiques, il attendrait que la nation en danger l'appelât pour combattre le despotisme, s'il voulait reparaître."

One important recommendation of M. de Bouillé had, like so many others, been set aside by the King. It was the General's advice that the carriage should be accompanied by three couriers of experience, and with a thorough knowledge of the country through which the travellers were to pass. The King accepted the idea of three attendants, but insisted that they should be three gardes-du-corps, disguised as couriers, one of whom, M. de Vallory, was to precede the carriage, and see that the relays were all prepared. To the inefficiency of these gentlemen, who brought to their duties nothing but their loyalty, may be ascribed the entire failure of this part of the scheme; and, it may be added, the failure of the flight.

The passport of a Russian, Baroness Korff, who was to leave Paris for Denmark, had been procured by the assiduity of the Comte de Fersen, and fortunately it was made out for the precise number of people who composed the royal party:—"De par le Roi mandons de laisser passer Madame la Baronne de Korff, se rendant à Frankfort avec deux enfants, deux femmes, un valet-de-chambre, et trois domestiques. Le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, Montmorin." It seems extraordinary that the King should have shown so little common sense as to disguise himself as a *valet-de-chambre*, in a plain grey suit of clothes, and a round hat, and then to be seen sitting inside the carriage in front of his mistress. This was a blunder for which

no one but the King was responsible.

To facilitate the escape from the Palace, several preliminary arrangements were made. The King desired that the key of the apartment which was commonly occupied by the first gentleman of the bed-chamber should be given to him. This was known to one of the *dames d'honneur* who was on terms of great intimacy with M. Gouvion. He, it has been already stated, had communicated his suspicions to M. de Lafayette, and his mistrust was still more aroused by this unusual occurrence.

On the evening of the 20th, when all the Court had retired to rest, the King went to his room, leaving orders to have the state carriages ready the next day for

the procession of the *Féte Dieu.* His valet having as usual fastened a riband to the head of the bed, for the King to awake him if necessary, returned to the next room. When the King, passing through a number of small passages, arrived at the apartment of the Queen, he found everything prepared for his disguise. In the Pavillon de Flore, at one end of the Palace, there was a door from the Queen's rooms; which communicated by a small staircase with the apartment of Madame de Tourzel, and thence by another flight of steps with the great court. It was strange that this exit had been left unguarded many days in succession, and through this all the royal party were to pass. The three Gardes du Corps had received

their instructions from the King personally. The names of these devoted men were Valory, De Moustier, and De Malden. The King pointed out the nature of the service and its dangerous character. His instructions to M. de Valory were clear and explicit.

"M. de Bouillé," he said, "awaits me with a *corps d'armée* at Montmèdy. Detachments of troops are posted at Pont de Sommevesle, St. Menehould, Clermont, Varennes, and Dun. You will precede the carriage, and on arriving at Pont de Sommevesle, you will ask for the Duc de Choiseul; inform him of our departure, and tell him to see that the troops under his orders are on the alert. As the carriages pass through, the troops are to

fall in behind them; and, most essential of all, they are to block the road to Paris, and not to permit anyone to pass. You will see the commanders of the different detachments; at St. Menehould it will be the Marquis de Dandouins, with a troop of the regiment of Dragoons of Monsieur; at Clermont M. le Comte, Charles de Damas; at Varennes there will be stationed a regiment of the Hussars of Lauzun; at Dun a large force is concentrated. You will order at each post six horses for a berline, and two for a light carriage, and two saddle-horses. But, above all, avoid delay."

Well would it have been if the King had acted in conformity with his own instructions to others, and shown in his own

conduct his sense of the importance of time.

The Comte de Fersen had ordered a coachman to take the carriage, with four horses, to the barrier of Clichy, and thence to conduct it by a road outside the barrier to the Porte Saint Martin. He himself hired a hackney-coach, and, disguised as the driver, stationed himself as near as possible to the Tuileries.

At midnight the party left the Palace. M. de Valory describes the Queen and Madame Elizabeth as perfectly tranquil and composed. Madame de Tourzel took charge of the Dauphin and Madame Royale, and reached the hackney-coach in safety. M. de Moustier gave his arm to the Queen; M. de Malden his to Madame Elizabeth. M. de Valory followed with the King.

The Queen and Madame Elizabeth wore large bonnets, which concealed their faces; a most necessary precaution, for the authorities, alarmed at the reports circulating through the city, had directed the court of the Palace to be lit with an unusual number of lamps. It may have been an essential precaution to divide the royal party, but it had one disadvantage—it added to the risk of delay when time was all precious. The alarm of the Queen may be well imagined when she saw, on arriving at the corner of the Rue St. Nicasse, a carriage approaching, accompanied by guards and servants with torches. This was M. de Lafayette on his way to the Tuileries. The Queen could scarcely be prevented from returning to the Palace;

as it was she crouched trembling at the angle of the street, and the carriage went on, as M. de Moustier remarked to her the glare of the torches preventing her from being seen.

The extreme folly of replacing experienced couriers by M. de Moustier and Malden, who, however admirable in their loyalty, and however willing to run all risks, were utterly incompetent to undertake such responsibilities, was proved as soon as they had left the Palace, for they were even ignorant of the streets in the immediate vicinity of the Tuileries; and the Queen, in searching for the hackney-coach, actually found herself with her guides in the Rue de Bac, at the opposite side of the river.

The carriage was found at last, at the corner of the Rue de Échelle; it had been drawn up by M. de Fersen under a wall, and would have been passed unnoticed, only he saw the Queen, and approaching her in a careless manner, whispered, "On vous attend." The Queen entered the carriage, where she found the whole party, except the King and M. de Valory.

Half an hour elapsed—half an hour when every minute seemed an age, for only sorrow and anxiety are leaden-winged—joy speeds by swift and dreamlike—half an hour, when the monarchy depended on minutes, when the destinies of thousands were at stake. The Queen was in a state of indescribable anxiety. The King also had missed his way, and was wandering

like a stranger in the vicinity of his own Palace. Of those precious moments, never to be recalled, some few had been devoted to fixing the buckles of the King's shoes, which had become loosened—strange attention to slight things at such a moment!

The Queen, sitting trembling in the carriage, could see the sentinels as they passed, with measured step, beneath the lamps, and heard the tramp of the night patrols as they clattered along the quays. As one by one the lights of the Palace were extinguished, so one by one her hopes had been overclouded, until darkness had fallen upon her. It was a terrible necessity thus to leave her home, but most sad of all was the reflection that if

he for whom she was waiting had possessed the spirit of his princely race, all might have been saved—at least, the monarchy would never have been degraded. It was too true, her prediction was to be verified—"Le Roi était trop malheureux."

Yes, truly, he was too unfortunate. All the sinister omens that attended his birth, all the evil predictions of the free-thinkers at the close of the late reign, the fatal accidents which attended the rejoicings on the occasion of his marriage, proved that the tide of fatality from the earliest days was setting in against him, and that the waters were still rising.

Fortuna fortes metuit, ignavos premit. No one was less fitted than the King to undertake any enterprise in which decision

of character, command of mind, and collected conduct were indispensable. His mind was essentially occupied with details, his very affections were wanting in that quality which leads to their strengthening instead of weakening the mind. Only in the closing scene of his life's tragedy he rose to the greatness of his misfortunes; but he had then been long schooled in adversity.

At last, however, the hackney-coach was reached. The King took his place inside it, M. de Valory got up behind as a servant, and M. de Fersen mounted the box; but even now, when under the guidance of M. de Fersen, this lamentable loss of time was not to terminate. The Count had ordered his coachman to take the berline from Madame

de Sullivan's, Rue de Clichy, to the Porte Saint Martin; but the Count, fearing there might be some mistake, instead of driving straight to the Barrière Saint Martin, resolved to pass by the Rue de Clichy, fully an hour out of the way. The Royal party were unable to understand the cause of this detour, and the King became more and more uneasy, as the coach passed down the Rue de l'Échelle, through the Rue Sainte Anne, the Rue de Grammont, and the Chaussée d'Antin. He wished to stop the carriage, but the risk of creating the least disturbance prevented his doing so; and the Queen, as she had every reason to do, placed the greatest confidence in the judgment and discretion of M. de Fersen.

Arrived at last at the Rue de Clichy, the

carriage stopped at the house of Madame Sullivan. M. de Fersen descended, and asked if the Count de Fersen's coachman had called for Madame de Korff's berline. He heard, with mingled feelings of satisfaction and regret, that it had left two hours previously. So he remounted immediately, galloped the horses through the Rue de Clichy, outside the Boulevard to the Porte Saint Martin, and there was the heavy berline waiting, with six horses, and the eventful journey was about to commence.

The Queen breathed more freely; at last she was without the walls of that city which had become insupportable to her. Her own sad life was henceforth to form part of those associations which cling to Paris, and ren-

der it, of all cities, the one most fraught with interest. There lay the city beneath the heights of Montmartre, still in its beauty, all passions seemingly at rest, the river gently flowing through it, the moonbeams and the ripple of the water mingling together. There were the towers of Notre Dame, where Monarchy was crowned, the tower of the Conciergerie,* where Monarchy was destined to be entombed. Who, gazing on the beautiful and peaceful scene, could realize the fact that death presided there? Who could foresee that every house was to be a house of mourning,† or imagine that all this

* It is to be regretted that the Haussmann mania has condemned the Conciergerie, which is to be pulled down.

† "The French Revolution, which certain writers

sorrow was to be caused by the failure of a scheme, long pondered over, and admirably designed; failure owing to causes seemingly so trivial and accidental, that the evil results of each one might have been averted but for the concurrence of others equally slight?

M. de Valory mounted the courier's horse,

have set themselves the task of justifying, was not, as they say, the work of the people, who suffered as much or even more than the wealthy from the odious excesses. The following statistics are eloquent on the point:—In Paris Nobles executed, 1,278; women of the same class, 750; together, 2,028. Nuns, 350; priests, 2,135; together, 2,485. Females of the labouring classes, 1,467; commoners of all conditions, 13,633; together, 15,100. Women of lower class killed in La Vendée, 15,000; children, 22,000; together, 37,000. At Nantes the number of Carrier's victims was 10,000, of whom the nobles and clergy formed only a very small proportion—namely, nobles executed, 1,400; priests, 310."

the two other *gardes-du-corps* got on the box seat, and the royal party entered the berline. It was a quarter to three in the morning when the carriage was fairly started. It became soon evident that the cumbrous vehicle, even with six horses, would never be able to move more than five miles an hour, while in a light carriage the whole distance to the frontier might have been accomplished easily in twelve hours. The *gardes-du-corps* were unable to rouse the postilions, and were themselves wanting in activity and energy. Even at the first stage out of Paris the horses were not ready, and again there was a long delay; while the size of the carriage, and the number of horses it required to draw it, excited the merriment of the postilions.

Had the King been satisfied with two light travelling-carriages, the success of the expedition would have been secured. The proof of this is that Monsieur and Madame by different routes both reached the frontier in safety. The Princess de Lamballe, who started at the same time, arrived in England without interruption.

But if the carriage rolled slowly on, at least nothing occurred to destroy the confidence of its occupiers. At Bondy, M. de Fersen, who had preceded them in a light vehicle, bid farewell to her for whose life he was willing at any moment to lose his own. It was a farewell full of hope of meeting again; but, alas! the hope was delusive—the separation was an eternal one. And now for this family, so

linked together in love and misfortune—for community of sorrow ever strengthens the ties of affection—a fresh light seemed to dawn. Every roll of the wheels bore them farther from the scene of their misery, and nearer to security. Through the silent night, from post to post, they sped. It was a summer night. The delicious coolness of the air, after the heat, the oppression, the excitement of Paris, conveyed a sense of repose to which the travellers had long been strangers, and even the Queen began to be hopeful of the result. Only a few more hours, and they would be in safety!

The morning dawned bright and sunny on the rich undulating country that lies between Paris and Châlons. The villagers

were all going quietly to their work; the tocsin had not at that time carried terror to every heart; the passions of Paris had not fermented in the provinces. The unsightly carriage, as it rolled along, attracted little observation. Unfortunately, one of the springs of the lumbering vehicle broke, and one of the *gardes-du-corps*, unpractised in such matters, lost some time in repairing it. As if that delay were not sufficient, the King, fatigued by the night journey, insisted, in opposition to the earnest entreaties of the Queen, on walking up a hill which the horses, which were quite fresh, could easily have trotted up.

When they reached the stage immediately preceding Châlons, the Queen called

M. de Valory to the carriage door, and expressed her confidence in a favourable result.

"Madame," M. de Valory replied, "at ten leagues from Paris you were safe; we should have been followed long before this if your Majesty's departure had been discovered. There is now nothing to fear; there is no appearance of any suspicion or mistrust. Courage, Madame! Beyond Châlons, at Pont de Sommevesle, the King will find a faithful escort."

Confidence and hope filled their hearts; the countenances of the Queen and Madame Elizabeth wore an expression even of gaiety. About three in the afternoon the berline, followed by the light carriage, with the two attendants, entered Châlons. This was

the anxious moment—it was the last place of any importance which they had to pass through. Châlons once left behind, they considered themselves in safety. Fate at last seemed to relax its persecutions. The carriage drew up at the post-house. The King, with exceeding folly, leant forward, and was recognised by the post-master, who, fortunately, was a loyalist, and approaching the carriage, he told the King to sit back. Here, however, occurred another most unfortunate delay. The fresh horses were restive, and one of the wheelers kicked over the pole. All the horses had to be taken out, and put in a second time. During this painful delay, a man approached the carriage, and whispered, "You have not managed well; you will be

stopped." The feelings of the travellers at this announcement may be imagined.

But in spite of this prognostication, and the valuable time that had been lost, Châlons once left, the fugitives became entirely reassured. The King exclaimed, "We are saved!" The Queen wept for joy. And well might they think that all their troubles were now ended. They were approaching Pont de Sommevesle, where the first detachment of troops was stationed, under the command of M. de Goguelat, subsequently to be commanded by the Duc de Choiseul, who had left Paris two hours before the royal carriage, riding post, and who arrived at Pont de Sommevesle at eleven o'clock in the morning.

M. de Valory had instructions, on his ar-

riving at Pont de Sommevesle at once to communicate with the Duc de Choiseul; but, to his extreme surprise and disappointment, there were no troops, no Duc de Choiseul, nor M. de Goguelat. He soon learned that the troops had been withdrawn half an hour before his arrival. He wandered about the village in the hope of finding some aide-de-camp of the Duc de Choiseul who could give him any information; but not one trooper had been left behind. The berline was approaching —he ordered the horses out, and then went to the carriage-door to tell the King that the advanced post had been withdrawn, but that there was no commotion in the village.

This fatal error on the part of the

Duc de Choiseul is one of the most painful episodes of this distressing history. It is impossible to deny that had the Duc de Choiseul and M. de Goguelat fulfilled their instructions, it is more than probable that the Royal Family would have been saved. When the long dark night had closed upon this tragic drama, men had time to ask how it was that plans so admirably conceived, so skilfully arranged, failed so entirely. The great difficulty, that of leaving the Palace and the city, had been overcome, and the danger after that was thought to be comparatively slight. All those concerned in this enterprise have endeavoured in various memoirs to justify their own conduct; and as the fate of the Monarch

depended on the strict execution of orders, it is interesting to pause here and consider the explanations given by M. de Bouillé and the Duc de Choiseul of their part in this sorrowful transaction.

M. de Bouillé, in his narrative, admits of no mistake in the instructions which he gave the Duc de Choiseul, in his reply to a letter of the Duke's, in which the latter attempts to justify his conduct. M. de Bouillé says:

"I have again to repeat that you deserted the post of Pont de Sommevesle, notwithstanding the precise orders I gave you to await the arrival of the King; and although, in the statement I have received from you, you pass over this in silence, I am compelled to point out to you the ex-

treme importance of this order; for you must have known that it was the key of the whole arrangement, and that the detachment under your command was the first in the chain of the escorts of the King, who would never have been arrested at Varennes if this instruction, on the strict execution of which depended the success of the whole scheme, had been carried out. Your presence at Pont de Sommevesle would have given confidence to the King, who was astonished and disconcerted not to find you there. All this was planned with yourself and M. de Damas at our last interview. You were told to protect the King by following him with your detachment until you met the other escorts, and your example would have influenced

them. And you were most especially enjoined to leave a small detachment on the road, to stop all the travellers and couriers, which you neglected to do, and which was the cause of the aide-de-camp of M. de Lafayette reaching Varennes. Lastly, you were instructed to send a trooper to give due warning to the different posts of the passage of the King, which would have afforded time for the relay at Varennes to be placed at the entrance of the town, It was to promote this very object that there were horses prepared for you to change at every post on the road.

"The success of all these measures depended on the strict execution of the instructions you received; and I regret

that they were all disconcerted by your retreat from Pont de Sommevesle; and if on every occasion disobedience of orders is most culpable, it was most especially so on the present one.

"I have said, and I repeat this statement, that you were ordered, in the event of the arrest of the King, to rescue him by force. The same order was given to M. de Damas, and he admits it. But in place of attacking the mob at Varennes, you laid down your arms. The King may choose to make excuses for and pardon you for these several breaches of duty, but I, as your general, charged with the responsibility of all these arrangements, feel it incumbent on me to tell you how grave were the errors you committed."

In his original memoir, to which M. de Bouillé refers, he expresses himself in still stronger terms. He says:

"The berline arrived at half-past five at Pont de Sommevesle, where the King expected to find the first escort, and considered himself in safety. But what a cruel surprise!—the earth, as His Majesty himself expressed it, seemed to open at his feet! There was no one there; he did not see the Duc de Choiseul, who left Paris two hours previous to the Royal Family, with the certainty of their being on the road; nor M. de Goguelat, whom he was told to expect; nor was one of the detachment of forty Hussars there to give him any intimation of this change of plan.

"In effect these two officers, after having waited until half-past five at Pont de Sommevesle, thought it right to retire, and took upon themselves to withdraw the detachment under their orders, without even attending to the instruction to cave a force on the road to intercept the communication with Paris; and in withdrawing, not only did they leave the high road, by passing along which they might have strengthened the different posts, if they had not thought Pont de Sommevesle tenable, but M. de Choiseul even sent an instruction to the commander of the detachment at Saint Menehould to unsaddle, who, being an officer in his own regiment, obeyed him only too faithfully. He thus substituted

his own orders for those of his general, who had relied on his implicit obedience."

These were most grave and painful accusations, and the Duc de Choiseul was compelled to reply to them. He stated that he arrived at Pont de Sommevesle soon after eleven, and had every reason to expect the King about one o'clock. He found M. de Goguelat, with his Hussars, who, by another error in judgment, had entered the town without the trumpets sounding, in the desire not to attract too much attention. The Duc de Choiseul ordered the horses to be put into the stables, but the troopers were to be ready at a moment's notice.

"According," continues the Duc de Choiseul —"according to our calculations, the cou-

rier (M. de Valory) should precede the berline by an hour. We expected to see him at twelve o'clock, and the carriage at one. Three o'clock arrived, and there was no courier and no carriage. We strolled up and down the street, and either myself or M. de Goguelat were stationed on a height whence we could see a long way around us. Four o'clock—no news of the fugitives. I cannot say what I suffered from the necessity of appearing quite indifferent at a time when I was overwhelmed with an intense anxiety. During this terrible delay, a violent tumult was preparing around us. It most unfortunately happened that the occupiers of an estate belonging to Madame d'Elbeuf had refused to pay certain taxes, and the

threat was held out that their houses would be occupied by troops. When the population saw the Hussars, they imagined that the soldiers were intended to carry out the threat, and the tocsin was immediately rung. It was known at Châlons that a post of Hussars was stationed in Pont de Sommevesle, it created suspicion, and a detachment of the National Guard was sent to discover their object. The Hussars happened to be the especial objects of mistrust; and the people said openly—'The Hussars are very cunning, but we are a match for them.'

"I considered that my duty was concentrated in this sentence: 'Take such measures as will enable the royal carriage to pass without obstacles;' and five o'clock

struck in the midst of this increasing and most painful anxiety. Our position became every moment more and more intolerable. I had given out that we were waiting to escort a treasure. Everything threatened a commotion, which, if the King had arrived in the middle of it, must have ended in his immediate arrest. Half-past five o'clock struck, and I then asked the post-master whether it was some time since money had been forwarded to Metz. He replied that 100,000 crowns had been sent that morning, and that it was escorted by two National Gendarmes. Then I turned quietly to M. de Goguelat, and remarked this must be the treasure we were waiting for. So we might now leave the town.

"I ordered the troopers to mount, and this at once calmed the agitation that prevailed. It was a quarter to six before we left Pont de Sommevesle; we then took the cross road to Varennes, to avoid Saint Menehould, where M. de Goguelat assured me there were already, when he passed it, signs of disturbance."

M. de Choiseul then proceeds to state that the road he traversed was so bad that, as the night came on, it was very difficult to find the track. One of the troopers fell, and was so much hurt that they were detained an hour, and only arrived at Varennes at half-past twelve—an hour and a half after the arrest of the King.

It was certainly painful that any con-

troversy should arise on this melancholy occasion; and again, it is the distressing question of a few minutes loss of time—in this instance almost of a few seconds. If the Duc de Choiseul did not leave the village until a quarter to six, the King must have arrived almost before the last trooper was out of sight.. Had the Duke, when retreating, taken the high road to Saint Menehould, instead of following the advice of M. de Goguelat, the fugitives would have caught him up; and that escort, added to the force at Saint Menehould, would have sufficed to overpower any opposition, and openly to escort the King to the frontier. It must, on the whole, be admitted that M. de Bouillé was fully justified in most severely censur-

ing the officers in command at Pont de Sommevesle. If the flight was to be assisted by the presence of troops, then it was essential that every arrangement and instruction connected with these detached forces should be most rigidly adhered to; but it is evident that it would have been far better to have followed the original advice of M. de Bouillé—to have concentrated the army on the frontier, but to have relied for the success of the journey on speed, rather than on force.

Immediately after the departure of the soldiers the berline drove up. The crowd had not dispersed, and the size and singular appearance of the carriage gave rise to many surmises; still, no one ventured to arrest the travellers. The horses were put

to, and they were allowed to proceed to Saint Menehould.

They started again, M. de Valory preceding them by a quarter of an hour, most anxious to have the relay ready on the arrival of the carriage, that there might not be a minute's delay. He was distressed at the inexplicable absence of the Duc de Choiseul, and dreaded to find Saint Menehould in the same state of excitement as Pont de Sommevesle; for he was aware that the detachment of the regiment of Monsieur, which was quartered there, was not equally to be trusted with the Hussars. As he entered the town, its appearance justified all his apprehensions. The streets were crowded with National Guards, the drums were beating, and

as he traversed the Grande Placé, he saw the dragoons collected about the door of the inn. Not far off, standing in the street, he recognized the Marquis de Dandouins, who commanded the squadron; but he avoided all conversation, and passed on at once to the post-house, to order out the horses. The horses were just ready, when the cracking of the postilions' whips were heard, and the berline rattled up. To M. de Valory's regret, he saw M. Dandouins approach the door, and excuse himself to the King for not daring to order his troop to escort the carriage. The population were in such a state of excitement, it would at once lead to a disturbance, and the carriage would be stopped.

Here it must be observed, as M. de Bouillé says, that had the orders been duly sent on from Pont de Sommevesle, M. Dandouins and his troop would have been waiting for the King outside the town. He would have then been surrounded by a strong and faithful force, for, the Duc de Choiseul's Hussars added to the dragoons, no force that the people could suddenly have collected would have been sufficient to bar the passage.

The Royal Family started again, anxious, and yet feeling renewed confidence from the presence of M. Dandouins, and the few soldiers they had left at Saint Menehould, that the danger, which was manifest, had been overcome. Little did they think of the unseen peril, that was even then riding beside them.

The post-house at Saint Menehould is described, by one who recently visited it, as desolate and melancholy in its aspect, so large that a whole regiment of cavalry might be accommodated in the stables. Around the door which led into the stable-yard a small knot of people collected when the berline drew up, and gradually increased to a crowd; for there were rumours that the berline contained some important personages—but so vague that no remark was made aloud, and nothing occurred to excite much alarm. The passport was demanded, read, and declared to be *en règle*. In an evil moment, however, the King, impatient at the delay, leaned forward to speak to the postilion, when his features were recognized

by more than one man in the crowd. These, however, were not quite confident, or they still possessed some lingering affection for the Royal Family, and some consideration for their misfortunes; but one man stood there whose name will be ever recorded with execration by whoever writes this ill-starred history.

Drouet, the son of the post-master, was noted at Saint Menehould for his extreme opinions. He had recently returned from Paris, which he had visited in order to take part in the Republican orgies of the capital, hoping thus to entitle himself to the confidence of all the lowest ruffians in the place, and to become a leader of the most abandoned of the *canaille*. He had seen the Royal Family, and had ob-

served the features of the King, never to be forgotten, so impressed were they with the stamp of anxiety and sorrow. Cold and merciless as were all these Republican fanatics, he took the lead of them on his return; and Saint Menehould being so near to the frontier, where the emigrant forces were collected, topics and means of excitement were never wanting. It was most unfortunate that during the morning he had had an angry discussion with M. de Goguelat, who had hired a horse from some private person instead of at the post-house.

The subsequent entrance during the morning of Captain Dandouins and his troopers awakened Drouet's suspicion; and these once roused, it would have been difficult,

under the most favourable circumstances, to allay them. Still, in spite of all his suspicions, and the restlessness of the crowd, had the carriage started at once the fugitives would have been saved; but Drouet, who had observed the King lean forward, was determined to examine the travellers' countenances more closely. He had that morning received a roll of new assignats; and holding one in his hand, he walked up to the door of the berline, and gazed steadily at the King; but although quite satisfied of his identity, he was yet undecided what course to take. It was uncertain whether the troopers would not, in such an emergency, rally round the sovereign; and while he remained in this state of indecision, the postilions cracked their

whips, and the carriage rolled away towards Clermont, where the King knew that a strong detachment of cavalry was posted under the command of Count Charles de Damas, and only two stages beyond which the Royal Family would find themselves in the middle of an army devoted to their cause.

The Marquis de Dandouins had remarked the inquisitive glances of Drouet, and the suspicious fact that, after having looked attentively into the carriage, he had examined carefully the assignat he held in his hand. He had noticed his annoyance when the carriage drove off, and that, with one of his companions, called Guillaume, he went immediately to the stables. M. de Dandouins felt that there

was no time to be lost. He gave orders for his troop to mount, and determined to follow and protect the King; but when he went to the barrack where the greater number of his men were waiting, booted and spurred, he found a crowd collected round the gate. The people were calling aloud for the National Guard, and seemed determined to prevent the departure of the escort. M. de Dandouins felt the great importance of the crisis. It might have been possible to force a passage through the crowd, if the troops could have been depended on; but the fraternisation with the National Guard had already commenced, and the soldiers gave unmistakable signs of disaffection. All he could do was to give secret orders

to one of the most faithful of the non-commissioned officers to hold himself in readiness to follow Drouet's movements, should he leave the town in pursuit of the carriage.

The Count de Damas at Clermont had been all this eventful day a prey to the same anxiety as the commanders of the other posts. Hour after hour sped on, and no signs of the berline. By admirable management he had reconciled the town to the appearance of the troops; and as night closed in they were all consigned to their quarters. At last the sound of the carriage was heard, which M. de Valory had only preceded by ten minutes. M. de Valory spoke to M. de Damas, and told him of the King's disappointment, at

the Pont-de-Sommevesle, at not finding the Duc de Choiseul.

As they were conversing the berline drove up. M. de Damas stood at the door of the post-house, surrounded by his officers and dragoons. The horses were ordered out, and put to in ten minutes. At that hour in the evening, notwithstanding the peculiar appearance of the carriage, it did not attract much attention. The King and Queen made M. de Damas signs of satisfaction; while Madame de Tourzel called him to the carriage-door, and complained of the fatigue of the children; but, to the infinite joy of M. de Damas, the postilions mounted again, and away the carriage drove. One of the couriers called out in a loud voice

to take, not the road to Verdun, but that to Varennes—a fatal order.

Now commences that drama which in its interest has never been equalled for the greatness of the actors, the vast interests at issue, and the mere accidents on which the result turned. When before was ever King chased through a gloomy forest?—when did the life of a Monarch depend on which turn of the road the pursuer should take, or on the loud order given by a courier?

The hero of this drama is Drouet; and never before had a fanatic such an opportunity of acquiring a terrible fame? No sooner were the carriages fairly started from Saint Menehould than he ran to the

Town-hall, and acquainted the authorities with his suspicions. They did not attach much importance to them, but gave him authority to pursue the carriages. While Drouet was with the municipality, his friend Guillaume was saddling the horses, and in the course of twenty minutes they had started in pursuit. They parted at a place called La Grange les Filettes. Guillaume took the road by Au Bois, Outrez, La Chalade, and Fleuret; Drouet the high road to Clermont, which he entered soon after the departure of the Royal carriage. When he found at the post-house that he was too late, the miserable man was loud in his cries. He rushed through the streets, exclaiming that the King had passed

through, and was escaping beyond the frontier. He compelled the municipality to sound the tocsin, and call out the National Guard. The troops in the town were surrounded, caressed, and plied with drink; and when Count Charles de Damas ordered them to mount and follow the King, they refused to obey him. Meanwhile Drouet, with an unconquerable energy, having aroused all the worst passions of the people, mounted a fresh horse and recommenced the pursuit. All that the Count de Damas could do was to order M. de Rémy, a most faithful and attached officer, with four of the most trustworthy dragoons, to follow the carriage. Strange fatality! M. de Rémy, by a mistake, instead of the road to Varennes, took that of Verdun; while

Drouet, who was on the road to Verdun, was told by some travellers that no carriages had passed that way. Had M. de Rémy followed the road to Varennes, he could have overpowered any slight opposition on his arrival there. Had Drouet kept on the road to Verdun, the king was saved.

At the information received from these travellers, Drouet hesitated; and on that moment of hesitation the Monarchy depended. Determined to turn back, he did not know whether he should return by the high road the same way, when he could proceed at full gallop, or take the lonely and unfrequented Chalade Pass. Had he selected the high road, all was saved; for he would have encountered M. de Rémy and the Dragoons sent after

him by the Count de Damas; but he chose the mountain pass, and, by desperate riding, headed the Royal carriage, meeting Guillaume at the Faubourg of Varennes.

So on this calm and still summer night, through the forest of Argonne, the pursuer and the pursued were speeding, the horseman and the troopers riding madly through the tangled wood—the horseman on his mission of desolation and blood, the troopers to save a sovereign from a cruel fate, a nation from a terrible crime. On they rode in wild excitement. In Drouet every mad passion had been roused. He thirsted for notoriety, and obtained it, in the execution of thousands of victims of his successful ride—an immortality of infamy; for young Rémy it was a desperate last effort

to rescue the King he loved so well.

And yet Drouet narrowly escaped paying the penalty of his black design. A Maréchal-de-logis of the Dragoons of Choiseul, carrying an estafette, had taken the same road. He met Drouet, and conversed with him. From his observation he suspected some evil purpose, and felt for his pistols in his holsters, with the intent of shooting him on the spot. Drouet observed the movement, had sufficient self-command to remove the suspicion from his companion's mind, and continued his road unmolested.

The small town, or rather the irregular straggling village of Varennes, is situated on the river Aire, which divides the upper town, on the Paris side of the river, from

the lower. The Aire is crossed by a narrow bridge, flanked by a stern old feudal tower, a dark relic of the Middle Ages, but which had never witnessed a more mournful scene than on this night. The escort which had been sent from Montmédy was ordered to remain with the relay of horses on the Montmédy side of the river, instead of in the upper town on the Paris side. The reason assigned for this was that, in case of any commotion, it would be easier to change horses, and also that the troops would thus avoid disturbing the town; but, by the strangest oversight, no one was stationed at the entrance of Varennes, to inform the fugitives where the horses and troops were to be found.

The Comte de Valory, always some way in advance of the berline, approached Varennes. As he drew near the town he was seized with a secret presentiment of future evil. When he entered the Faubourg, he expected to see the horses ready, and the escort under the orders of the son of the Comte de Bouillé and the Comte de Raingecourt. To his surprise and regret there were no troops, no horses, not even a messenger—the town was slumbering in repose.

M. de Valory went into the small alleys which branched from the main street, but there was no one to meet him. Heart-sickened with undefined apprehensions, he ventured to knock at a door to inquire if any horses or postilions had been seen.

He dare not allude to troops. The reply was there were none. In M. de Valory's own words, he was seized with an anxiety so overwhelming as almost to paralyse his faculties. Having searched in vain, he listened, in the hope that some sound would break this painful silence, this agonizing suspense. He heard the roll of a carriage in the distance, and the cracking of whips. It was the berline. He hesitated whether to meet the carriage or to continue his search; and during all this distressing suspense young M. de Bouillé and his companion were sitting at the window of their inn at the other side of the river, anxiously listening, and wondering at the cause of this unexpected delay.

Can history produce any crisis, any thirty

minutes of time equal to these in the intensity of their interest? The Royal fugitives were approaching Varennes, Drouet galloping through the forest on merciless intent, but followed by M. Rémy and his faithful troopers. On the other hand, the Duc de Choiseul and M. de Goguelat were hurrying from the Pont de Sommevesle, with the Hussars, who might be entirely depended on. M. de Goguelat was perfectly acquainted with the place where the troops were stationed at Varennes; so, if he anticipated Drouet, all was safe. Meanwhile, security was assured if the carriage once crossed the bridge, for near Varennes troops were massed along the road, and the population were more loyal. At a short distance from Varennes,

M. Deslon was stationed with a hundred Hussars; ten leagues on was a part of the Royal German regiment; at Stenay was M. de Bouillé himself, with another Hussar regiment. Everything was combined to insure success, and yet all was at that moment lost.

It was just half-past eleven; the cracking of the whips announced the approach of the carriage. By the orders of the King, it drew up outside the town, where they expected to find the Count de Bouillé and his detachment added to the force under the Duc de Choiseul and M. de Goguelat; instead of which not a person was to be seen, not a voice was heard. The noise of the carriage and the whips of the postilions failed to

excite any attention. The King inquired of the postilions where the horses were to be found, as there was no post-house at Varennes, and their own horses were too tired to proceed further. He did not insist at first on being taken to the lower town, as he had been led to expect that the horses were to be placed at the entrance of the Faubourg. At the risk of awakening the inhabitants, he desired the postilions to crack their whips again, to arouse the attention of the slumbering escort.

M. de Valory now returned to the carriage,* with the intelligence that neither

* In M. de Valory's memoir, he states that, when he reached the carriage, the King exclaimed, "François, nous sommes vendus; un courrier qui vient de passer a defendu aux postilions d'aller plus loin,

troops nor horses were to be found. The King and Queen then descended themselves; for in moments of deep anxiety inaction adds to pain. They wandered through the vacant street and adjoining alleys, awakening the occupants of several houses, to know whether any relay of horses had been seen. No one could give any satisfactory reply. They returned to the carriage; all was silent as before. To the tired villagers it mattered little that a travelling-carriage should be detained on the road. The postilions found a

et leur a ordonné, de part la nation, de dételer, ajoutant qu'ils menaient le Roi." But this is not confirmed by any other account, and is inconsistent with the whole of the narrative; for, as is shown, the postilions did proceed, and were only stopped at the bridge.

bucket, and were watering their horses, preparatory to unharnessing them and leaving the carriage. Suddenly the silence was broken by the sound of horses' hoofs. "The escort!—the escort!" exclaimed the Queen. The sound drew nearer and nearer; the riders were galloping in desperate haste. The Queen clasped her hands in convulsive anxiety. No, it was no escort, but two men in blouses and ordinary clothes, their horses reeking with foam, who galloped by the carriage, messengers of evil destiny as they were. The King sat down on a bench dispirited and exhausted by fatigue. M. de Valory once again sallied forth to see if he could obtain any information. At last in a house he saw a light, and

on knocking, a person stepped forth, and at the request of M. de Valory, approached the carriage. This was M. Le Chevalier de Prefontaine, who had formerly held an appointment at Court, and at once recognised the King. He advised him to drive without delay to the Grand Monarque, in the lower town, where he knew that horses and a large guard had been waiting two days. The postilions alleged that their horses were tired, and refused to proceed. At last the entreaties of the Queen, and the promises of the King, induced them sulkily to drive on; but three quarters of an hour had elapsed since the horsemen passed, and as they drove slowly down the steep street to the narrow bridge over the Aire,

the Queen shuddered with the presentiment of impending misfortune.

Drouet and Guillaume—for these were the two horsemen who had passed the carriage—lost not a moment in carrying out their treacherous design. They rode at once to the Auberge du Bras d'Or, which was kept by a well-known patriot named Le Blanc. On their way they met a man named Georges, to whom they confided the momentous secret, and he expressed his willingness to assist them in their endeavours to prevent the escape of the Royal family. The first thing they did was not to lose a moment in barricading the bridge; this they accomplished by overturning a cart in the centre of it, and heaping up all the stones

and rubbish they could find. The carriage drove on with its anxious freight, but had scarcely entered on the bridge, when the leaders fell at the barricade. The carriage was immediately surrounded by five or six sinister figures. Lanterns were put into it, and the fugitives were ordered to show their passport. By the pale light the passport underwent a rigorous examination, and was declared to be entirely *en règle.* The name of each traveller was written upon it, and it had received the signatures of the members and President of the Constituent Assembly. It was taken away to be viséd, after which ceremony the travellers were assured that they would be allowed to proceed.

At this moment, critical as it was,

the King might have escaped if he had possessed sufficient courage. The inhabitants were not yet roused by the drums beating to arms. The three gardes du corps were well-armed; one shot would have roused young De Bouillé; the troopers would soon have cleared the trifling barricade. There was no force in the town sufficient to resist the Hussars. Once across the bridge, another carriage could have been procured, and Varennes passed, they were in safety. But the same want of energy which had been apparent throughout the life of the King characterized him in this emergency, and he refused to permit M. de Valory and the others to act for him.

It is more than probable that, but for the activity of Drouet, even now,

after the visé of the passport, the Royal party would have been permitted to proceed; but that man, steeped in malignity, rushed into the presence of the Municipal Council, and overruled their opinion. He sent his satellite's, the agents of his evil designs, to arouse the townspeople, to beat to arms, and to sound the tocsin. Although now past midnight, a crowd soon collected. The man Georges, meanwhile, cut the traces of the harness, so that a prolonged delay became inevitable. The municipality, with the Mayor of the Commune, felt themselves placed in a situation of great difficulty. On the one hand the population would be indignant and excited if the fugitives were permitted to proceed; on the other, even if they

proved to be the Royal Family, it was by no means certain that the authorities in the capital had not connived at their escape, and their arrest might be most unacceptable to them. At last it was resolved to advise the travellers to delay their departure; indeed, it was quite out of the question to proceed until fresh horses were procured, the postilions positively refusing to push on to the next relay. It was then that M. Sausse came to the door of the carriage, and said, "The Municipal Council has been deliberating on whether they may permit the carriage to proceed; but the report has spread that we have the honour of possessing the King and the Royal Family within our walls; I beg to offer them the shelter and protection of

my house during the further deliberations of the Municipality. The crowd in the streets is every moment encreasing by the number of people entering the town from the country at the sound of the tocsin, and Your Majesty may be subjected to annoyances which the Municipality are most anxious to prevent."

After this appeal there was no reply possible but to accede to an invitation which, however courteously framed, bore very much the appearance of a command. M. Sausse gave his arm to the Queen, Madame Elizabeth followed with M. de Valory, and the King led the two children. They crossed the market-place, and entered the house of the Mayor. Already the crowd collected was so great that it was

difficult to force a passage; but no outrage was offered, no insolent remark was made; the people seemed rather overcome by astonishment. Many were still incredulous, so much so that a M. Destery, who had formerly been attached to the Court, was sent for; and it was not until he recognized his former master that the Municipality were satisfied that they had not been led into a great blunder.

The Royal Family were conducted to an upper room in Sausse's house. The Dauphin was laid on a bed in a corner, and fell asleep immediately, overwhelmed with fatigue. Madame de Tourzel (whose importunate demand to accompany the Royal Family was one of the causes of this great calamity), overwhelmed with

grief, sat near the Dauphin. Madame Royale had a bed in an adjoining room. The King, the Queen, and Madame Elizabeth stood near the window, anxiously observing the increasing crowd.

At this time two important couriers were proceeding on their different missions. The Municipality had sent off one to Paris, for instructions how to act in this great emergency. In the opposite direction young De Bouillé, at last aroused from his fatal inaction by the disturbance in the town, was galloping towards Dun, to announce to the General the fatal result of the enterprise. Again it became a question of time If the General could depend on the force concentrated at Dun, and arrive at Varennes before the messengers despatched

from Paris, the Royal Family might still be saved; and this was far from improbable. Count de Bouillé, starting at half-past eleven, should have arrived at Dun at one o'clock, at Stenay at two. The force at Dun, commanded by M. Deslons, it was expected could arrive by four o'clock at Varennes; M. de Bouillé, with the Royal Allemand regiment, might be expected between five and six; and the whole of the force, amounting to nearly two thousand men, would have been sufficient to destroy the trifling barricades and overawe the town.

But the courtesy of M. Sausse misled the King. So soon as it was unmistakeable who the fugitives were, a second deputation from the Commune waited upon

them, saying that "the inhabitants of Varennes, having no longer any doubt that they had the honour of possessing the King and the Royal Family, came to His Majesty for orders."

The King replied with dignity,

"Yes, it is your King and your father who comes to seek an asylum here. I was driven from Paris by the outrages to which my family was daily exposed, and by the impossibility of doing my duty. You ask me for orders. I wish horses at once to be put to my carriage, that I may be permitted to continue my journey to Montmédy."

M. Sausse replied—

"I will convey Your Majesty's instructions to the Commune."

This was at half-past one. At two o'clock a third deputation appeared, again headed by M. Sausse. He said,

"The Municipality have deliberated on their means of enabling Your Majesty to continue your journey; they pray that Your Majesty will permit the National Guard to escort the carriage, as they have ordered horses to be put to the carriage, and they await Your Majesty's further instructions."

The King replied—

"I thank the Commune for their good intentions, and gratefully accept the escort; but I wish that there may be no further delay, and desire to depart immediately."

It is difficult to say whether all this

civility of M. Sausse was simply to gain time and to prevent any violent effort of the King to escape. As soon however, as it was announced in the street that the King was to be permitted to proceed, the ferment became very great. Drouet passed from house to house, exciting those who were already prepared for any excess. Arms were distributed amongst the crowd; and even the Commune became alarmed for the safety of the King, for whose life they would be held responsible.

The cry "To Paris! to Paris!" was raised; and, amid all this tumult, a fourth deputation waited on the King, to say that the people were so resolved that he should not depart, they dared not act in opposition to the popular feeling; but a

courier had been despatched to the Constituent Assembly for instructions."

This was a manifest evasion of Sausse, for the courier had been despatched long before. It is fair to give M. Sausse credit for good feelings. He might certainly have connived at the escape of the King, but he could only have done so at his own peril.

The mob were becoming more and more excited, and it could scarcely be expected that, with any regard to his own safety and that of his family, M. Sausse could have braved their fury, if he permitted the King to depart. Mr. Musgrave, who recently visited Varennes, and examined the whole locality, says, "Sausse might easily have connived at the escape of the prisoners. There

is a narrow passage alongside the block of buildings on which his house stands, on to which a small scullery opens, Beyond this there is a covered wood-store, out of which a narrow door leads into a lane, six feet wide, between two walls, the steep inclination of which terminated that day in the fields at the top of the town. The night was very dark, and would have befriended them in gaining some temporary shelter, until powerful aid should have completed their deliverance."

Shortly after the last distressing announcement of the Commune, the Duc de Choiseul and M. de Goguelat arrived with the hussars, having lost four precious hours in the forest of Argonne. The Duc de Choiseul found the entrance of the town

strongly guarded. As they approached there were loud cries of "Qui vive? La France!" "Lauzun Hussards!" was the reply. At this, one of the National Guards seized the Duke's bridle, desiring him to stop until orders arrived from the Municipality. To this the Duke's only answer was a blow with the flat of his sword, which made the man relax his hold; and he then marched his forty men to a small barrack near the entrance of the town, where a guard of three or four troopers was stationed at the door of the barracks. Soon afterwards two officers arrived from the Hôtel de Ville, and ordered the Duke to report himself to the Municipality. This he declined to do; but he judged that the time had now arrived when the announcement

should be made to the troops that the King, Queen, and Royal Family were arrested, and detained prisoners in the town. He was delighted to hear the shout they raised of "Der König! Die Königin!" On this he gave the order to remount, and they rode down to Sausse's house, where, in spite of the menaces of the mob, they were all drawn up before the door. He dismounted, and forcing his way by two or three men armed with pikes, who stood in the passage, he entered the room which the Royal Family occupied. At the same time M. de Damas arrived from Clermont, but, unfortunately, only accompanied by four troopers, the rest having joined the people.

The King was seated at a table, with

an expression of the deepest dejection on his countenance. On it were the remains of such a repast as Sausse was able to provide at that hour of the night—bread, cheese, and a light wine of Bordeaux, of which the King, with his usual kindness, had expressed his approval. When M. de Choiseul entered the King exclaimed "*Que faire?*"

"I come to save Your Majesty," was the reply, "give your orders, Sire. I have here forty Hussars; they can force a way, and escort Your Majesty to Dun; but you, Sire, must decide. I propose, to dismount seven of my men. Your Majesty will mount one horse, holding M. le Dauphin in your arms; the Queen, Madame Royale, Madame Elizabeth, Madame de Tourzel,

will each have a horse. The Hussars will surround you; we will cut a way through all opposition, but there is not a moment to be lost."

The King said, "Can you guarantee that in a conflict of thirty men against seven or eight hundred, a shot will not kill the Queen or one of my children?"

"If this were to happen, Sire, I should kill myself on the spot."

"Well," replied the King, "let us discuss this calmly. The Municipality do not refuse to let me leave, they only ask me to wait until morning. Young Bouillé left at half-past eleven to announce our detention to his father. It is now two o'clock; the troops are posted all along the road, in the course of another hour

some of the detachments should arrive, and M. de Bouillé will himself be here with the whole of his force by five or six o'clock. Had I only myself to think of, I would follow your advice, but there is the safety of my whole family to be considered."*

* Of the Duc de Choiseul's conduct in this trying moment young M. de Bouillé, in his memoir, bitterly complains. He says the Duke's instructions were, in case of any arrest, to force a way for the King in the face of every obstacle; that it was his duty to charge and disperse the mob, without entering into any negotiations with the Municipality, or going to His Majesty for orders, or trusting to what M. de Bouillé calls "*la cruelle bonté* of the King." There is much truth in all this. From the first the Duc de Choiseul had been sadly deficient in energy and foresight. But young M. de Bouillé does not explain his conduct at Varennes; why he remained perfectly inactive in the lower town, without taking the simple precaution of placing one trooper at the upper

The dreary hours sped on, the miserable night drew to a close, and the pale morning dawned. The sight was a sad and strange one, never to be forgotten by those who from time to time entered the room to gaze on the anxious family. The children at five o'clock were still fast asleep. Madame Sausse, when she gazed on them, was so struck with their beauty and grace, that she burst into tears, and falling on her knees by the bedside, asked permission to kiss the hands of the children, and to pray for their safety. The comparative tranquillity of the later hours of the

part, to await the arrival of the carriage, and to tell them where the guard and horses were stationed; nor has it ever been explained how it happened, if he left Varennes at half-past eleven, why he did not arrive at Stenay until half-past four.

night was now broken by the beat of drums and the tramp of the National Guard. Again the terrible tocsin rang its peal in the ears of the Royal Family, the shouts of the crowd were renewed, and the cries became louder as the dawn crept on. It was rumoured that M. Sausse had permitted the King to escape. The menaces of violence against him became so great that at last he was reluctantly compelled to ask the King to appear at the window; and in what a Royal garb! In his soiled travelling costume, with dishevelled hair, uncombed and unkempt, he rose from his seat. It is to be regretted that at this moment he so far forgot his dignity as to assert that he never intended to leave the country.

"Sire ni si fie pas," was the cry from the crowd in the *patois* of the Argonne.

"Qu'est-ce que ce brave homme dit?" asked the King.

"Ni si fie pas," was repeated to him. It was, alas! true; no one could credit such an assertion.

It was now five o'clock. M. Deslon, informed by the young De Bouillé of the King's detention, immediately marched with his troops, whose loyalty could be depended on, and arrived without difficulty at Varennes. After a deliberation in the Municipal Council, he was permitted to have an interview with the King. He told His Majesty what force he had waiting at the other side of the bridge.

"I have guarded the bridge with a part

of my force, and I can bring with me fifty troopers who may be depended on. These, added to the force under the Duc de Choiseul, are sufficient to resist the mob.

"What!" replied the King, "risk the lives of these soldiers, when resistance is out of the question!—it would be to compromise them all uselessly. No, we must await the arrival of M. de Bouillé."

But time was flowing on; six o'clock, eight o'clock came, and no M. de Bouillé. But, alas! there arrived an aide-de-camp of M. de Lafayette—M. de Romeuf, who had been despatched the moment the escape of the King was known, accompanied by M. Baillon, one of the National Guard, sent by M. Bailly, the Mayor of Paris. They were received with loud cheers as they ap-

proached the house of Sausse. The cries of "A bas le Roi!" were mingled with the terrible shout, "A Paris!—à Paris!" M. de Romeuf had been formerly attached to the special service of the Queen, and bore her and the King great affection. He wished to approach the Royal Family with the greatest delicacy and reserve; but such was not the feeling of his colleague M. Baillon, who at once forced his way through the crowd, and, without any preface or announcement, entered the Royal presence.

His countenance, naturally severe, was rendered more so by the fatigue and the excitement of the journey. He seemed terribly agitated.

"Sire," exclaimed he, "you know—all

Paris is in arms,—our wives and children all will perish,—there will be one general massacre!——You must not proceed—no, sire—no! In the interest of the State! Think, sire, I repeat, of our wives and children!"

At these words the Queen seized his hand with an energetic movement, and showed him the Dauphin and Mademoiselle, who were still sleeping, overcome by fatigue.

"Am I not also a mother?" she exclaimed.

"What is your object?—what have you to say?" asked the King.

"Sire, here is a decree of the Assembly."

"Where is it?"

"My colleague has it."

The door was opened, and M. de Romeuf appeared, overcome by his feelings. He was leaning against the door, and in tears. He held a paper in one hand, and covered his eyes with the other as he approached the King.

"Ah! sir," exclaimed the Queen, "is it indeed you? I should never have believed this possible."

The King tore the decree out of his hand, and perused it. It was as follows:—

"The Assembly decrees that the Minister of the Interior shall send couriers into all the departments, with orders to arrest all persons, whoever they may be, who are seeking to leave the kingdom; and in the event of such couriers meeting with the King, or any members of

the Royal Family, the public functionaries, National Guards, or troops of the line are to take every measure possible to prevent such departure from the kingdom, and to render an immediate and full account to the Assembly of all their proceedings."

Having perused this document, the King exclaimed—"There is no longer a King in France!" The Queen then took it up. The King asked for it again, read it once more with great attention, and threw it on the bed where the Dauphin was lying. The Queen, with indignation, snatched it up, exclaiming, "I will not allow it to defile my child!" and threw it on the ground. Then there arose a murmur amongst all the patriots who filled the

passage. The Duc de Choiseul picked up the decree, and placed it on the table. The King turned to M. de Romeuf, took him aside, and implored him to let him gain all the time possible; any moment—the very next moment—M. de Bouillé might arrive.

The people were as well aware of this possibility as the King, and now the tumult and uproar grew wilder and wilder, to compel the King to leave before the arrival of any succour. Crowds were coming in from the neighbouring villages. The Municipality informed the King that they calculated there were not less than ten thousand people collected in the streets, who wished to force their way into the house, and drag the King out.

"*Nous les trainerons par les pieds dans la voiture!*" they exclaimed. The King showed himself at the window. All was useless; every moment the crowd increased in numbers and violence of language; and at last M. Sausse said that the Municipality could no longer restrain the people, who were preparing to attack the house. On this cruel occasion there was no delay in procuring horses. The carriages were drawn up at the door, and it was announced to the King that all was ready. Marie Antoinette burst forth in indignant expressions—

"You are very bold! You are very cruel! What, do you wish to plant a dagger in our hearts? Have any subjects the audacity to command the King?

Whence spring these sacrilegious principles, which are capable of justifying the greatest outrages and crimes?"

All in vain—the Royal party had to leave even such shelter as Sausse's house afforded, and to pass through the mob of wild, excited men, armed with every variety of weapon, worked up by Drouet, Guillaume, and others to the highest state of violence. This they proved by at once arresting the Duc de Choiseul, Comte Charles de Damas, and M. de Goguelat; and the King had the misery of seeing his most devoted adherents in the power of the infatuated and infuriated crowd. The three *gardes du corps* were ordered to occupy the front outside seat of the berline, and amid the shouts and

blasphemies of the raving people, the cruel procession—for it was one long procession of armed men—set forth.

And at this very moment, M. de Bouillé, with two regiments, was only three quarters of a league from Varennes. When he heard that the King had left, he refused to believe the disastrous intelligence, and continued his march; but when close to Varennes, it was confirmed by M. Deslon, who had with his Hussars crossed the river at a ford, in the vain hope of rescuing the King. Even then M. de Bouillé would have followed His Majesty, but General Hoffelize and the other officers showed him it was impossible to do so. The horses required rest after the rapid march from Dun; the carriage by that time must have been one

hour in advance; and even could it have been overtaken with tired horses, his troops, however faithful, could have availed little against the mob which by this time surrounded the King, and formed his formidable escort.

It was decided therefore to retreat, and to leave the Monarch to his fate. The despair of the gallant General and his staff cannot be expressed. An eye-witness says, "Never shall I forget the sorrow that overcast M. de Bouillé's countenance, never shall I forget the mournful accent with which he turned towards me. I had but a short time before been expressing my confidence in the success of this expedition, from the success which invariably attended all his undertakings. He

then said to me, with tears rolling down his cheeks, 'Eh bien, direz-vous encore que je suis heureux.' The soldiers shared our grief, and we marched in profound silence."

The scheme of flight had failed—failed by the most remarkable coincidence and combination of unfortunate and unforeseen circumstances of which history can furnish any example. Henceforth the life of the Monarch, of his Queen, of his family, the throne, and the safety of France, were at the mercy of the caprice of the most capricious people. Terrible days were now to dawn on the unhappy country; throughout the length and breadth of the land the cries of an agonized nation were to be heard; the many were to become the

victims of the few. Tales of sorrow and of agony to touch the hardest heart will now arrest the attention of the student of French history. But he will seek in vain for a record of any event so fraught with the tragic element, so absorbing in the intensity of its interest, so overwhelming in the consequences of its failure, as the record of the flight of Varennes.

THE END.

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